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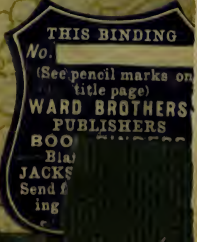
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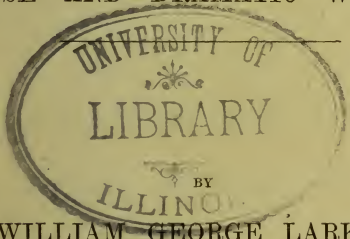
A

HANDBOOK

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

PROSE AND DRAMATIC WRITERS.



BY

WILLIAM GEORGE LARKINS,

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY; FELLOW OF THE STATISTICAL SOCIETY; SECRETARY OF THE METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION FOR PROMOTING THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS.

LONDON:
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS,
THE BROADWAY, LUDGATE.
1867.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

Uniform in style and price,

A HANDBOOK OF ENGLISH LITERATURE:

POETRY.

TO

THE PRINCIPAL AND STUDENTS

OF KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON,

WHERE

MY LOVE FOR OUR NOBLE ENGLISH LITERATURE WAS FIRST FORMED

AND DEVELOPED,

UNDER THE ABLE GUIDANCE

OF

PROFESSOR HENRY MORLEY;

AND

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE MANY PLEASANT HOURS I SPENT THERE

I Dedicate

THIS LITTLE WORK.

PREFACE.

THIS Handbook is a modest attempt on the part of the Author to supply, in a cheap, concise, and learnable form, what is really necessary to enable any one to acquire a tolerable knowledge of the history, rise, progress, and authors of our English Literature.

It was suggested by his own want, while a student, of a portable epitome, unencumbered with long biographical essays or illustrative extracts. For this reason it will be found to recommend itself to students of all grades, especially to those of EVENING CLASSES, &c. Another object that the Author has in view is the promotion of a more general study of English Literature in schools. Such study has been to a large extent neglected, while it certainly as much deserves a place in the system of education as does English History. The study of both should be simultaneous, in order to obtain a true appreciation of either.

The matter which fills the following pages is drawn largely from notes taken in the lecture-room, and the results of the critical reading of many books, all of which is woven together by a thread of originality. Entire originality is not claimed; for wherever the language of another expressed the meaning better than his own, the Author has adopted such language. He only regrets that the necessarily small space at his disposal prevents him from acknowledging, otherwise than by marks of quotation, the obligation he is under.

The order followed in the arrangement of the various writers, is to take the date of their death. This is not the usual order, but it seems to be a more satisfactory one, as the writers are generally reflected by, as well as being a reflex of, the times in which they lived.

It has also been concluded to stop somewhere about the year 1845, all writers this side of that date being fairly within the knowledge of the present day.

Let it also be borne in mind, that this is only a handbook, and is not intended to supplement any more extensive works on the same subject, and does not profess to be extremely critical. The Author only hopes to lead those who may follow him to the fountain from which

he trusts they will drink at their leisure and inclination many a refreshing draught.

The student should carefully read the introduction to each period, before proceeding to the accounts of the writers and their works.

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A

HANDBOOK

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

PROSE AND DRAMATIC WRITERS.

INTRODUCTION.

The foundations of our English Literature were laid when the Saxons were converted to Christianity by the preaching of Augustine. With Christianity came the dawn of civilization and learning in England. The efforts of the forty monks, sent with Augustine by Pope Gregory to Britain in 596, were singularly successful. In one year Ethelbert, King of Kent, with ten thousand of his people, abjured their appalling superstitions to embrace the gentler doctrines of the Gospel; and within fifty years the Christian faith had been adopted throughout the various kingdoms forming the Saxon Heptarchy. At Canterbury was established first a cathedral and then a school, the latter supplied with books by the munificence of Gregory. This school, which soon became famous, is well said to have been "the first national school in England."

To the exertions of Bishop Theodore, a great and enthusiastic patron of learning, and himself an author of repute, as well as to the labours of his friend Hadrian, described by Malmesbury as being "a fountain of letters and a river of arts," do we owe the foundation of our scholarship.

From this time to the commencement of the ninth century, schools were established in various places, and learning increased. One of the most noted of the schools was that of York, supported by Archbishop Egbert, and rendered attractive by the great reputation of Alcuin, its learned president.

The course of study is represented as including "grammar and composition, classics, arithmetic, and dialectics." Another important school was that of Wearmouth, an offshoot of the Canterbury school, where Bede spent the many years of his student life.

In the beginning of the ninth century a decline in learning took place, to be attributed to the incursions of the Danes. So great was this decline, that when Alfred ascended the throne the most deplorable ignorance prevailed, and but one or two of the Churchmen who daily read the Latin service could understand one word of what they uttered: both priests and people had fallen into the most degraded condition.

Alfred made the greatest possible efforts to re-establish both piety and learning. He invited to his court all the learned men of Europe, and rebuilt all the monasteries which the Danes had destroyed. In order that all classes of his subjects might obtain instruction, he established a system of national public school education; and that his people might read and learn for themselves, he endeavoured to create an Anglo-Saxon literature. His efforts for this object were untiring, especially in translating with his own hand a number of Latin works.

With all Alfred's exertions, however, a decline in learning again took place after his death. It was almost impossible for the country to bear up against the unceasing strife to which it was subject. Education found no home in the camp, and England was one great battle-field. Edward the Elder and Athelstan, Alfred's immediate successors, did what they could to sustain and carry on what he began; but neither their efforts nor the influence of the schools of Glastonbury and

Winchester, which still flourished under the care of Dunstan and Ælfric, was sufficient to keep burning the lamp of learning. As far as Anglo-Saxon literature is concerned, it did go out, and the "tenth century closed in darkness," which reigned—with the exception of a brief interval of light in the time of Canute—till the Conquest.

Among the works of the early Anglo-Saxon writers, there are few to be found in the Anglo-Saxon tongue. Latin being the language of the Church, and the great source from whence all the learning of the age had been obtained, it was natural that the first books should be in the Roman language. Moreover, it was to the scholars of other countries than England that the authors looked for readers.

Gildas, the first British prose writer of whom we have any note, lived in the sixth century. His works were a "History of the Britons," and an Epistle, both in Latin.

Aldhelm, born in Wiltshire, was for some time Bishop of Sherborne, in Dorsetshire. He wrote many works on theology, arithmetic, rhetoric, and grammar, which, though pedantic and barbarous in style, display great talent.

Bede, a priest, called afterwards the "Venerable," for his piety and learning, was born in 672 and died in 735. His name stands foremost in the literature of Britain. At the age of seven he entered the monastery at Wearmouth, in which he stayed till his death. His works, nearly all of which were written in Latin, included homilies, treatises on various subjects, commentaries on parts of the Scriptures, and lives of the saints, and were chiefly theological. The principal was the "Ecclesiastical History of the Saxon Church," a work of great usefulness, which relates nearly all the public transactions of the Anglo-Saxon period. It is of the highest value, as showing the progress and development of the national learning. The style in which it is written is simple and easy, and at the end Bede gives a list of

eight-and-thirty works which he had written or compiled.

Alcuin and John Scotus or Erigena were two of the other eminent Latin writers. The former an Englishman, born in 735; the latter an Irishman, whose early history is not known. They both carried their learning over to the Continent, Alcuin becoming a teacher at Aix-la-Chapelle, under Charlemagne, and afterwards Abbot of Tours, where he died, 804. Scotus resided latterly at the court of Charles the Bald.

ANGLO-SAXON WRITERS.

Alfred, King of England, stands foremost among the writers of Anglo-Saxon. It is true that his productions were chiefly translations, yet he may be given the credit of being an original writer, since the translations were accompanied by commentaries, reflections, and notes. The preface to his translation of Boethius is considered to be the best specimen of Anglo-Saxon we possess.

Alfred's translations were Bede's History, the "Regula Pastoralis" of Gregory, "De Consolatione Philosophiæ," and the "Ancient History of Orosius."

In translating these works, Alfred was actuated by the highest motive—that of instructing his people and stimulating a spirit of religion and morality amongst them.

Ælfric, Archbishop of Canterbury in the tenth century, was the author of several original works, of which a "Glossary of Latin and Saxon Words" and a Saxon version of the Latin grammar were long used in the English schools. His "Eighty Homilies," written in the simplest Anglo-Saxon, are, however, his chief work; he died in 1006.

Dunstan, Abbot of Glastonbury, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, was born in 925. His monkish life is well known. His works are chiefly theological, that best known being "Benedictine Rule,"

suited for English monks, having its Latin interlined with a translation in Anglo-Saxon.

The "Saxon Chronicle" is perhaps the most valuable of all the literature of the period that has come down to us. It is said to have been originally compiled from Bede by an Archbishop of Canterbury named PLEGMUND, and carried on by him up to the year 891. Till 1154, when the registers of the monasteries ceased to be kept, the monks regularly added to it an account of all events of importance. It thus embraces the history of many years, and is in most respects reliable, as the scenes are described by those who lived in their midst.

ANGLO-NORMAN WRITERS.

The Norman Conquest had a great effect on the learning and literature of England. In a literary sense it means a fusion of new blood, new ideas, new thoughts, and new language with what England had previous to it. The Anglo-Saxon prelates had, since the death of Alfred, gradually become less learned, till at the time of the Conquest they were far behind the age. A natural consequence of this was that Saxon scholarship also declined. When, therefore, the Conquest took place, the Anglo-Saxon prelates had to make way for the more polished men of learning from the Continent.

The Conqueror, assisted by Lanfranc, whom he appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, set to work with great activity to establish schools and religious houses. The elevation of the schools of Oxford and Cambridge to the dignity of Universities rendered them independent of the Church, and tended much to the general diffusion of knowledge.

The successors of William were also educated men, who favoured the advancement of letters. For two hundred years "nothing occurred to retard the development of genius, which here and there shone out

with more distinctness than it had done for centuries before."

The amount of Latin writing during the Norman period was very great, and amongst the principal prose writers may be mentioned

William of Malmesbury, born about the date of the Conquest, who stands in remarkable prominence among the chroniclers. His "History of the English Kings," in five books, extends from the landing of the Saxons to 1120. To this he afterwards added three other books, called "Historia Novella," which carry on the history to the year 1142. On the whole his history is reliable, though it abounds in the wonderful stories and superstitions which are to be found in all books of that age.

Geoffrey of Monmouth, a learned Welsh monk, who died in 1154, wrote a "History of the Britons," in which he preserved many legends and stories of the Celtic race. Among them is found the story of King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table. This writer may be said to have been the first English novel writer. Most writers at that time confined themselves to facts, but Geoffrey allowed his fancy to adorn the dim legends he records, and so mixes up fact and fiction that they cannot be separated. It marked the "beginning of a time when English intellect would find for itself many and varied forms of exercise." It was a "bright spring of romance in a wilderness of record."

Giraldus de Barri, surnamed Cambrensis to mark his nationality, and perhaps the most remarkable of the writers of this age, was born in 1147, the child of William de Barri, a powerful Norman baron of Pembrokeshire, and a Welsh lady of royal descent. He received his education at the University of Paris, whence he returned to Wales in 1172, and became Archdeacon of Brecknock. He succeeded his uncle as Bishop of St. David's. The king, Henry II., however, not liking the appointment, employed Giraldus on

several missions of importance. He sent him, in 1185, in the train of his son John to Ireland, and to this visit we owe two works of the greatest historical and antiquarian value, the "Topographia Hiberniæ," and the "Vaticinalis Expugnationis Historia." In the latter the conquest of Ireland by Strongbow is graphically and minutely described. He was again employed by the king, in 1188, to preach the crusade in Wales in company with Archbishop Baldwin. The "Itinerarium Cambriæ" was the result of this mission—a valuable and well known work. Before he died he wrote the history of his own life.

Roger Bacon, born in 1214, at Ilchester, in Somersetshire, is by far the greatest name in this period. His researches in physical science and his mathematical and literary attainments were far in advance of the age. Educated first at Oxford and afterwards at Paris, he made most astonishing discoveries, which obtained for him the reputation of being a magician and dealing in witchcraft, for which he was twice imprisoned. On the last occasion he was kept ten years in confinement. His chief works are the "Opus Majus," "Opus Minus," "Opus Tertium," the "Epistle on the Secret Processes of Art and Nature, and the Nullity of Magic," "The Mirror of Secrets," and "The Mirror of Alchemy." From these it has been proved that Bacon must have been acquainted with magnifying glasses, that he knew the composition and effects of gunpowder, and that he contemplated the possibility of steam travelling, both by land and water.

Matthew Paris, a monk of St. Albans, wrote "Historia Major," or a History of England, commencing from the Norman Conquest, and coming down to 1259, in which year he died. The whole of the early portion, down to 1235, has been appropriated from the "Flores Historiarum" of Roger Wendover. So far as it is a contemporary authority, this bulky work has always been considered as of the highest value, though full of prejudice.

Nicholas Trivet, a Dominican, composed a valuable and well written series of Annals, extending from 1135 to 1307.

Ranulph Higden wrote a work entitled "Polychronicon," which comes down to the year 1357, and was the standard work on general history and geography in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The Latin MSS. of it are prodigiously numerous. Chaucer made use of it, and it is quoted by other writers. It is divided into seven books, of which the first is a sketch of Universal Geography, taken from Pliny, Solinus, Bede, &c., and the second contains a summary of Universal History from the Creation to the destruction of the Jewish temple.

Ingulphus, Ordericus Vitalis, Henry of Huntingdon, Roger of Hoveden, were others of note among the early historians of England.

It is worthy of note that a collection of stories, gathered from every possible source and translated into Latin by some unknown person, appeared at this time. It is known as the "Gesta," and many of these dim old stories have been taken by Shakspeare, Sir Walter Scott, and others, and clothed with all the fancy of their genius.

The depressed state of the Saxon nation after the Conquest, its state of almost slavery, effectually prevented the writing of many Saxon books. The "Saxon Chronicle" was continued on to the year 1154, but beyond this no prose works seem to have been written.

Latin had hitherto been the language of the scholar, of the churchman, of education, literature, law, and correspondence.

Norman French, however, became at the Conquest the language of the upper ranks of society, and divided with the Latin tongue the work of expressing the thoughts and wishes of the court. Still Saxon remained the language of the people; not, however, without a gradual change taking place in its character. In course of time, as intercourse took place between the various ranks

of society, the two languages melted into one another. The Saxon merchants had to learn Norman in order to serve their rich customers, and the upper ranks had to learn Saxon to make their wants known to their servants. But above all was the fusion of the languages most forwarded by the marriages between the Norman conquerors and Saxon women. The Norman barons and the English commonalty thus drawn close together, the alien speech of the conquerors became identified with the national language, which firmly maintained its position—lost nothing of its own homely power of expression, while it gained in elegance of style. Like the Saxon type of nationality, the language did not lose its identity; and as it was a difficult matter to distinguish in the schools a Norman child from one of pure Saxon descent, one hundred years after the Conquest, so the Saxon tongue was as distinct as ever it had been from the French.

This fusion of the two languages thus became the basis of our modern English language, the Saxon, of the two, being by far the most predominant.

The secret of this predominance lies perhaps in the fact that it was the native tongue of the women who were married to the Norman strangers. Children learn their first words at their mother's knee, and thus in the intermarriages which took place, the children were well grounded in Saxon from their infancy, and their mothers took a natural pleasure in teaching them the language which they themselves spoke. It should be remembered that there was to a certain extent an affinity between the two languages. The Normans or Northmen themselves had come from Scandinavia, and had not till the days of Alfred obtained any legal settlement in France, although in two centuries they had forgotten whence they came. So that at the same time that the Danes were leaving their mark upon the English language, the Northmen were blending their hard-sounding gutturals with the softer and more musical language of the French.

No wonder, therefore, that when the two finally came

together at the Conquest there should be many words in common. It should also be borne in mind that, though William filled nearly all the Sees and court offices with Normans, it was not long before Englishmen made themselves felt, and compelled the proud Norman barons to recognize them as equals. Then, in the course of a few hundred years, war took place between England and France, in which the former generally came out victorious, and "the tongue of a humbled beaten enemy was likely to be less attractive to the mass of Englishmen than ever." So force of habit prevailed on the one hand, while dislike increased on the other, till Edward III. banished the hateful Norman French, then used nowhere but in the courts of law, and directed the English language to be used thenceforward in judicial pleadings, because French had become so much unknown. Finally, "it must not be lost sight of, that a sort of tacit compromise passed between the English and French-speaking portions of the population: the former were to retain the entire grammar—so much, at least, as was left of it—of the native speech; all the conjunctions, prepositions, and pronouns,—the osseous structure, so to speak, of the language,—were to be English; while, in return, the Normans were to be at liberty to import French nouns, adjectives, and verbs at discretion, without troubling themselves to hunt for the corresponding terms in the old literary Anglo-Saxon."

The English language, thus recast and beautified, assumed a settled form, and though, while the fusion and settlement was taking place, no literature is found, yet it was not long to remain thus barren. It became simultaneously the "chosen instrument of thought and expression" of Chaucer, the "morning star of English song;" Mandeville, "the father of English prose literature;" and Wickliffe, "the morning star of the Reformation." From that time "no Englishman could feel ashamed of his native tongue or doubt its boundless capabilities." Some changes have, of course, taken place since then. Through the next century an absorption

of French words took place, and when that ceased the manufacture of words directly from the Latin took its place, consequent upon the revival of classical literature. We have, however, reached the period when English literature individualized itself in a marked manner, and implanted itself too firmly to be again uprooted by adverse circumstances.

FIRST PERIOD.

From Mandeville to the Middle of the Sixteenth Century.

In the study of English literature it will be found that it is always on the side of truth and right. It has been well said that the power of the English character, and therefore of the literature that expresses it, lies in the energetic sense of truth, and the firm habit of looking to the end. Ever since Christianity was introduced, religious life has to a large extent been the centre of our sterling literature.

In the monasteries the earliest literature and learning was nurtured, and in the number of the early chronicles we have material evidence that there was mind at work under all the stir and tumult of the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman times.

The whole of the Anglo-Saxon literature had for its object the making the best of both worlds, to be right and to do right. It was not imaginative, but simple and free, looking straight to God. Its philosophy was but the collecting all the old legends and stories into an Encyclopædia, of which Bede is an example.

To spread truth, to make men better for what they wrote, to increase virtue and morality, to put down vice, to shame immorality, has ever been the aim of English writers.

The burst of literature headed by Chaucer, after so many years' silence, was to a large extent due to the

stirring events of the time, the commencement of religious and political persecution as men began to think for themselves, and the gradual awakening of the people to a sense of their power and influence.

It was then that the early writers stepped out of the obscurity and said their say; and if, after the first burst, there came a relapse of the darkness, it was because right for a time became merged in the power of might, and men dared not speak as they thought. The same period that saw the people freed of the last oppression, that gave them freedom of thought and action, saw the literature revive, ever after to be a power for good.

English literature may be divided into five periods—

1st. That extending from Mandeville to the middle of the sixteenth century.
2nd. That of the "Revival of Letters," which followed the introduction of the art of printing, and which may also be called the period of Italian influence.
3rd. That of the Puritans.
4th. That of the French influence which commenced with Dryden.
5th. That of the English popular influence inaugurated by Defoe.

Bearing in mind, therefore, that, under all the differings of the various periods, there was but one mind, and an honest Saxon love of truth and right, we proceed at once, without further introduction, to the writers of essentially English prose belonging to the first period.

SIR JOHN DE MANDEVILLE.

1302–1372.

Sir John de Mandeville was born at St. Albans, Herts. Though educated for the medical profession, he does

not seem to have followed it. At the age of twenty-two he set off to travel in distant lands. For thirty-four years he roved about the Old World, penetrating as far as Pekin, then an unheard-of adventure. He returned to England about the year 1358, and wrote an account of his travels. Having done so, he set off again on another roving expedition. Overtaken with illness, he died, and was buried at Liége.

NARRATIVE OF HIS TRAVELS,
In Latin, French, and English.

It was while laid up with the gout that he translated his work from Latin into English, and so earned for himself the title of the Father of English Literature. The book was evidently intended to serve as a sort of handbook of the Holy Land, the journey to which was then a very popular pilgrimage. Though Mandeville has the credit of being most mendacious, a loyal desire to establish truth was his. He was too credulous a believer in all the stories that were told him, and so loaded his pages with the most extravagant passages. Where, however, he speaks of what came under his own observation, he may be relied on most thoroughly.

JOHN DE WICKLIFFE.

1324–1384.

John de Wickliffe, a celebrated English religious reformer, born in Yorkshire, in the parish of Wickliffe, from whence he took his name. He was educated at Oxford, first at Queen's, and afterwards at Merton College, of which he was elected a fellow. In 1361 he was presented to the College living of Fylingham, and in the same year was made Master of Balliol. In 1365 he was made Warden of Canterbury College, by Archbishop Islip. This office was afterwards taken from him by Islip's successor, Langham, who seized the revenues of the foundation with the approval of Pope

Urban V., to whom Wickliffe appealed in vain. In 1372 he took the degree of D.D., and commenced to lecture on divinity and against the papal abuses. Against the Mendicant Friars, who then overran England, he was especially bitter, as indeed were nearly all the educated men of the age. Obtaining the patronage of the then powerful John of Gaunt, he was sent to Bruges, to meet and refute the claims of the papal nuncio. The next year he was made a prebend of Worcester, and in 1374 Edward III., whose rights he had maintained against Rome, presented him to the rich benefice of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire. In 1377, Gregory XI. commanded the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London to seize and examine him as a heretic. They obeyed, but the influence of John of Gaunt was so great that they released him on condition that he should cease to propagate his opinions. In 1382 the Council of London condemned his works as heretical, and compelled him to resign his offices and quit Oxford. He retired to Lutterworth, where he passed the rest of his life, suffering from palsy for some time previous to his death.

TRIALOGUS.
WICKLIFFE'S WICKET.
TRANSLATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.
MANY TRACTS, in Latin and English.

"Trialogus" is in Latin, and embodies his opinions in a series of conversations between Truth, Falsehood, and Wisdom; and "Wickliffe's Wicket" is a Learned and Godly Treatise of the Sacrament. Wickliffe's great merit consists in having given to England the first English version of the Bible. Completed in 1383, it is acknowledged to have done much towards developing the language. His writings are noble, straightforward, and hearty in their tone; sometimes rugged, but always thoroughly leavened with an earnest love of truth. They are also a representation of the great intellectual stir which characterized the age in which they were written, and of which Wickliffe was more the centre than the cause.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

1328–1400.

As Chaucer's genius was so essentially poetical, we will not dwell on his life here, but in its proper place, in the history of English poetical literature. Still he did write some prose,—

A FEW SCIENTIFIC TREATISES;
TWO OF THE CANTERBURY TALES;
TRANSLATION OF BOETHIUS;—

all of which are thoroughly English in their tone; the same manly earnestness predominating as in his poetry. The two "Canterbury Tales" in prose are those of Melibœus and the monks — both of them probably translations—the latter less a tale than a treatise on Repentance.

JOHN DE TREVISA,

Vicar of Berkeley, in Gloucestershire, translated into English prose the Latin work of a monk of Chester, called "Polychronicon." Some other translations were also made by him.

PECOCK.

Bishop Pecock wrote against the Wickliffites. The principal of his works extant are, "The Repressor," a defence of the clergy, and the "Book of Faith." The larger number of his books, despite their being against the Lollards, were burned, as containing too liberal opinions; and he was compelled to make a public abjuration of the opinions expressed in them.

SIR JOHN FORTESCUE,

Supposed to have been born in Devonshire, was Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1442. Wrote, whilst in

exile in Holland with Queen Margaret, one of the finest of our early English law books, "De Laudibus Legum Angliæ." It is in the form of a dialogue between himself and his young pupil Prince Edward, and was intended for his guidance when he obtained the crown. Perhaps the most interesting is his work entitled "Of the Difference between an Absolute and a Limited Monarchy," which is simply a "Treatise on the best means of raising a revenue for the King, and cementing his power," and draws a contrast between the English peasantry under the constitutional crown of England, and the French peasantry under the absolute monarchy of France. It is full of acute remarks and curious information. This work is in excellent English, and, if freed from the barbarous orthography in which it is disguised, could be read with ease and pleasure at the present day.

WILLIAM CAXTON.

1412–1492.

Caxton, supposed to have been born in Kent, was at an early age apprenticed to a silk mercer, one Master Robert Large. After his master's death he lived in Holland and Flanders for fully thirty years, as the agent of the London silk dealers. While there he became acquainted with the newly-discovered art of printing. At Cologne, in 1471, at the age of 59, after having translated a French work, entitled "Recueil des Histoires de Troye," he printed it, and this production of his press became the first English printed book. In 1474 he carried his types and press to England, and established himself in the unused almonry of Westminster. For upwards of seventeen years he continued translating and printing the sixty-five works which are ascribed to him.

Of these the principal are,—

THE GAME AND PLAYE OF THE CHESSE;
GOLDEN LEGEND.

The first was translated from the French, is divided into four treatises, and is illustrated with woodcuts. It contains a fable about the origin of chess, an account of the office of the various pieces, with a prayer for the prosperity of Edward and England. The "Golden Legend" is a large, double-columned work, of nearly five hundred pages, profusely illustrated with woodcuts.

WYNKYN DE WORDE,
AND
RICHARD PYNSON,

Assistants of Caxton. At his death they set up printing on their own account. Four hundred and eight works are ascribed to Wynkyn's press, and two hundred and twelve are said to have been printed by Pynson.

ROBERT FABIAN.
DIED 1512.

A London alderman, and author of "The Concordance of Stories, a Chronicle of English History," in which fact and fiction are "industriously heaped together with honest well-meaning dulness."

LORD BERNERS,

Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Governor of Calais under Henry VIII. In 1525 he published in London a translation of "Froissart's Chronicles," which relate the events that occurred in France, England, and other parts of Europe, between 1326 and 1400. The translation is very accurate, and executed with "wonderful felicity."

JOHN BELLENDEN,

Archdeacon of Moray, and a Lord of Session of Scotland, court poet to James V.

TRANSLATION OF BOCCE'S HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.
TRANSLATION OF FIRST FIVE BOOKS OF LIVY.
SKETCH OF SCOTTISH TOPOGRAPHY.

The translation of the "History of Scotland," which, like Geoffrey of Monmouth's "Chronicles," is overloaded with fabulous accounts, is the earliest existing specimen of Scottish prose literature, although not the first original work, which was "The Complaynt of Scotland," published in 1548, at St. Andrew's.

SIR THOMAS ELYOT,

An eminent medical man in the reign of Henry VIII., and friend of Sir Thomas More. He wrote the "Castle of Health," containing much good advice about food, &c., and a work called "The Governor," published in 1531, in which he recommends that children should be taught Latin from their infancy.

SIR THOMAS MORE.

1480–1535.

Sir Thomas More, son of Sir John More, a Justice of the Queen's Bench, was born in Milk Street, London, and educated at St. Anthony's School. At the age of fifteen he was received into the household of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, who sent him to Oxford, where he acquired Greek under Grocyn, and won the friendship of Erasmus. He studied law, and, having been called to the bar from Lincoln's Inn, he became a judge in the Sheriff's Court, practising in the other courts with success. Being appointed lecturer at Furnival's Inn, he soon became popular as a lawyer. Under

Henry VII. he was appointed under-sheriff of London, became a member, and finally Speaker of the House of Commons.

More became for a time the favourite of Henry VIII., who made him Treasurer of the Exchequer, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and in 1530 Lord High Chancellor, in which office he succeeded Wolsey, and obtained great credit for integrity and expedition. Losing favour with Henry VIII. by opposing his marriage with Anne Boleyn, he resigned his seals of office in 1532, and retired to his pleasant house at Chelsea. In 1534, the king not having forgiven his affront, he was thrown into the Tower, tried at Westminster for treason, and finally beheaded.

UTOPIA (Latin).
LIFE OF EDWARD V., OR RICHARD III.

The "Utopia" is in two books, and its aim is to satirize the abuses of the age and suggest much-needed reforms. There is no doubt that it often hit very hard both men and institutions; but the work was so extravagant in its conception, that More escaped the penalty that would otherwise have rewarded his rashness. The story is based on Plato's Republic. Utopia is an island discovered by a seaman, Ralph Hythloday, crescent-shaped, and 200 miles long. Its 54 towns are alike, and contain no taverns or lawyers. The fashions never change. The inhabitants work six and sleep eight hours a day. Gold, silver, and precious stones are uncared for. More is better known by this than by his English work, the "Life of Edward V.," which has been allowed to be the first specimen of classical English prose, "pure and perspicuous, well chosen, without vulgarisms or pedantry." More wrote some other works, chiefly theological tracts and Latin epigrams. He was also a great orator, but none of his speeches have been preserved.

WILLIAM TYNDALE.

1477–1536.

Nothing is known of Tyndale's early years, except what is stated in Foxe's "Book of Martyrs," that he was born on the borders of Wales, and brought up from childhood at Oxford. Later we find him a tutor in the house of Sir John Welsh; then preaching at Bristol; then finding a home in the house of Alderman Humphrey Monmouth, who afterwards gave him £10 a year to help him in his grand design of translating the Bible. After travelling through Germany, he finally settled at Antwerp, where the first edition of the New Testament was produced, and the copies sent to England. The translator suffered a fierce persecution, to which he finally became a victim, being strangled and burnt at the castle of Vilvoord, near Brussels.

THE ENGLISH BIBLE

was Tyndale's life-work. His English is considered by all authorities to be remarkably pure and forcible. The language he employs is always classical; and his great knowledge of Hebrew and Greek ensured fidelity of translation.

EDWARD HALL.

Died 1547.

A lawyer, and author of a valuable historical work called "The History of the Houses of York and Lancaster."

JOHN LELAND.

Died 1552.

Born in London and sent at an early age to St. Paul's School, he passed from there on to Oxford,

Cambridge, and Paris, and finally became chaplain to Henry VIII. A great linguist, he became insane during the last two years of his life.

AN ITINERARY.

This work, which has gained for him the title of the father of English archæological literature, contains the results of many antiquarian tours through England, and is a most valuable work of reference.

HUGH LATIMER.

1472–1555.

Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester, was famous as a leader of the Reformation. He was born in a farm-house in Leicestershire, and educated at Cambridge, where he for some time took a prominent part in the papal worship. Thomas Bilney, a pious Protestant clergyman, had, however, much influence over him, and he soon became as zealous a reformer as he had been a papist. Through the influence of Thomas Cromwell and Anna Boleyn, he was made Bishop of Worcester; but, in the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII., he resigned his bishopric, and was for six years imprisoned in the Tower. Liberated on the accession of Edward VI., the bishopric would have been restored to him; but he declined it. He lived for some time with Cranmer at Lambeth Palace, and devoted himself to the work of preaching; when, Mary coming to the throne, the zealous reformer was again committed, sent to the Tower, and finally burnt at Smithfield, for heresy.

SERMONS.

Though Latimer's sermons are the only works of which he was the author, yet they may be placed among the first specimens of English prose. They are homely and unaffected in style, plain and earnest in purpose, learned only in the Bible, and afford most

interesting and perhaps the best illustrations of the manners and behaviour of his time, and of the inner life and thoughts of the common people, to whom they were chiefly addressed. They are full of references to local events, and to his own experience and life.

THOMAS CRANMER,

1489–1556,

Was born at Aslaston, in Nottinghamshire, and educated at Cambridge, where he became fellow of Jesus College. He happened to suggest to Fox, the Royal Almoner (whom he met accidentally), that the question of the king's divorce should be referred to the Universities. This suggestion was repeated to Henry VIII., who answered, "The man has got the right sow by the ear;" and from that day Cranmer was a made man. In 1533 he was made Archbishop of Canterbury. After Henry's death he became leader of the Reformation in England, and may be said to have founded the English Church. In the reign of Mary, in the year 1556, after being induced to sign a recantation, which he immediately and utterly repealed, he was burned at Oxford. It has been well said that Cranmer's great fault was a want of decision and firmness.

THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.
TWELVE HOMILIES OR SERMONS.
CRANMER'S BIBLE, OR THE GREAT BIBLE.

On these three great works, of which he was the chief editor, rests Cranmer's literary reputation. The first contains some of the finest specimens of pure English prose to be found in our literature. Of the "Twelve Homilies," four are from Cranmer's pen. His Bible was called the Great Bible probably on account of its size. It is founded on Tyndale's version.

GEORGE CAVENDISH.

DIED 1557.

Gentleman Usher to Wolsey, and member of the Royal Household: wrote a very truthful "Life of Cardinal Wolsey," which was an important contribution to historical literature.

SIR JOHN CHEKE,

1514–1557,

Wrote an original work entitled "The Hurt of Sedition," also some MSS. translations from the Greek, the study of which language he successfully fostered at Cambridge, when there was a danger of its being refused admission to the University.

JOHN BALE.

1495–1563.

Born in Suffolk; Bishop of Ossory, in Ireland; died at Canterbury.

LIVES OF EMINENT WRITERS (Latin).
INTERLUDES AND SCRIPTURAL DRAMAS.
CHRONICLE OF LORD COBHAM'S TRIAL AND DEATH.

Bale is often violent and generally coarse in his manner. He took considerable part in expounding and defending the doctrines of the Reformed Church.

ROGER ASCHAM.

1515–1568.

Roger Ascham was born at Kirby Wick, in Yorkshire. He was the youngest of three sons of a yeoman, who acted as house steward to a nobleman. His studious

habits gained him the notice of Sir Anthony Wingfield, who adopted him and sent him to St. John's College, Cambridge. He graduated in 1534, and a month or two afterwards was made fellow of his college.

He was engaged in educating two sons of Brandon, Earl of Suffolk, also Prince Edward and the Princess Elizabeth, who never forgot her old Greek tutor. In 1544 he succeeded the able Sir John Cheke as orator at Cambridge, and Edward VI. made him his Latin secretary. Throughout the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth he retained this office, receiving a salary of £20 a year.

TOXOPHILUS.
THE SCHOOLMASTER.

These two works may be considered to be the first specimens of easy conversational English prose, polished and classical, perfectly intelligible now. In the first volume of "Toxophilus" he sets forth the value of manly exercises in a dialogue between Toxophilus and Philologis, and shows, much as a modern advocate of volunteering might, that the practice of archery need not interfere with business or study. In the second volume he gives the necessary directions to shoot well. In the "Schoolmaster," his principal work, he descants on education in a learned but pleasant way. It contains sound maxims, and its opinions are far beyond those of his time—perhaps even of our own. The style is graceful and vigorous, and gives evidence of the Italian or Latin influence that afterwards affected English literature generally.

MILES COVERDALE.

1487–1568.

Born in Yorkshire, and some time Bishop of Exeter, he spent a large portion of his eventful life in the translating and printing of the English Bible. In 1535 he published the whole Bible of Tyndale, which had been completed at Antwerp and secretly conveyed to Eng-

land. He was afterwards much engaged in the preparation of Cranmer's Bible, so called because the preface was written by Cranmer. Being exiled in the reign of Mary, he fled to Geneva, where his extensive knowledge made him of great service to the English divines who were translating the Geneva Bible.

JOHN KNOX.

1505–1572.

John Knox was the son of a peasant. Educated first at the Haddington Grammar School, he afterwards entered the University of Glasgow, where he took priests' orders. He was soon involved in the controversy of the age, and declared himself a Protestant in 1542.

After having suffered much persecution in Scotland, he was, in 1552, appointed chaplain to the King of England, Edward VI. When Queen Mary ascended the throne he returned to Geneva, and connected himself with Calvin. Returning to Scotland on the accession of Elizabeth, in 1558, he raised there a movement against the Catholic clergy, and finally established the Presbyterian worship. On the arrival in Scotland of Queen Mary Stuart (1561), he preached openly against her, and contributed not a little to overturn her authority. Died at Edinburgh.

HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND.
PAMPHLET "AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF WOMEN."
EXPOSITIONS OF THE SCRIPTURES.
TRACTS AND OCCASIONAL WORKS.

His writings are noted for their stern tone and absence of all geniality. The "History of the Scottish Reformation" is the most interesting to modern readers.

JOHN FOXE.

1517–1587.

Born in Boston, Lincolnshire, he received his education at Oxford, from whence he was expelled for heresy in 1545. After being reduced to a state of great poverty in London, he became tutor in the family of the Duchess of Richmond. Obliged to flee from England in the reign of Mary, he became Prebend of Salisbury in that of Elizabeth, after declining many other and higher honours in the Church of England. He spent eleven years over his "Acts and Monuments of the Church; or, Foxe's Book of Martyrs," a work which, though it received the sanction of the Bishops when published, is justly considered to be inaccurate.



SECOND PERIOD.

Revival of Letters and Italian Influence.

The art of printing gave a wonderful impetus to the advancement of learning and literature, and that, too, at a period of darkness and poverty. It also did more to settle the language than perhaps anything else. Caxton declares that the difference between the language of the learned, and that used by the common people, was so great, that he was often at a loss to know what words to use, in order to make his translations understood by all alike. Spelling was equally in an unsettled state, many words being spelt in different ways even in the same document. The art of printing settled all this; it gave fixity to the language at the same time that it gave permanence to thought, and brought books which had hitherto been obtainable by kings, princes, universities, and schools only, within the reach of the middle classes.

Literature, during the one hundred and fifty years that followed the brilliant opening by Chaucer and his contemporaries, Mandeville and Wickliffe, became feeble in character and purpose. The revival of learning which took place on the Continent, especially in Italy, after the fall of Constantinople, affected England in turn.

"Learning, no longer confined to the precincts of the college or the gloom of the cloister, began to wax into that 'august sunrise,' whose benign influence was to

be shed upon the mind of clerk and layman, prince and peasant, alike."

The peaceful and settled state of religion and the country generally, together with the brilliant achievements of maritime enterprise, must also be borne in mind. The former brought wealth and ease to the country, and these "brought leisure in their train; and leisure demanded entertainment, not for the body only, but also for the mind. As the reading class increased, so did the number of those who strove to minister to its desires; and, although England could not then, nor for centuries afterwards, produce scholars in any way comparable to those of the Continent, yet the number of translations which were made of ancient authors proves that there was a general taste for at least a superficial learning, and a very wide diffusion of it. Translation soon led to imitation, and to the projection of new literary works on the purer principles of art disclosed in the classical authors." The translations were principally from Italian works, the style of which so affected the reviving English literature that its influence has given a distinctive mark to the period. The Italian literature was studied by all people of education, and those English works were best received that were modelled from it.

The progress of maritime discovery, the opening up of the new continent of America, and the finding of the path to India round the Cape of Good Hope, had a wonderful influence on the literature and language. The description of these new countries, the accounts of the various navigators, the picturesque letters narrating the adventures of the voyagers, gave to prose-writing a freedom and solidity which contrasted well with the strained effect produced by too closely copying the Italian style, full of conceits, of word-twisting, and dependent too much upon "alliteration's artful aid."

From the Italian was borrowed one or two new forms of writing—the sonnet, the novel, the essay. The

latter, due in the first place to the genius of Montaigne, found a number of English imitators, "one of whom was afterwards to eclipse his original."

Francis Bacon published a volume of Essays, the title of which volume is in strict accordance with its contents and mode of reasoning. The lapse of years has completely altered the general meaning of the word "essay," which, coming from the verb *exigere*, means "to try," a meaning which was strictly adhered to by the earliest of essayists.

From this period dates the first regular newspaper, which did not contain any domestic intelligence, only foreign news. The first news-pamphlet which came out at regular intervals appears to have been that entitled "The News of the Present Week," edited by Nathaniel Butler, which was started in 1622, in the early days of the Thirty Years' War, and was continued, in conformity with its title, as a weekly publication.

It was not till the commencement of the latter half of the reign of Elizabeth that literature fairly revived from the servility and stiffness which had characterized it for so long a time. When, however, the revival did take place, the advancement was most rapid—so rapid that the period between the years 1580 and 1620 may well be called the Augustan age of English literature.

JOHN LYLY.

1554.

Not much is known of Lyly's life. Born in Kent, we find him a student at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he took his M.A. degree in 1575. He was esteemed as a wit, and lived in high repute as one at Elizabeth's court. After he left college he seems to have been in the service of Lord Burleigh. He was always pro-

mised favour and advancement by the queen, which, however, never came; and Lyly lived and died in straitened circumstances, if not in poverty.

EUPHUES, THE ANATOMY OF WIT.
ALEXANDER AND CAMPASPE, and Six other Classical Plays.
MOTHER BOMBY: a Play.
PAP WITH A HATCHET, and other Religious Tracts.

Though Lyly is the father of the modern English drama, he is less known by his plays than by his "Euphues." It was intended as a protest against the Italian strained and conceited writing, then, and for some years after, the style affected by the ladies and gentlemen of the court, both in writing and speaking. Lyly is falsely credited with having made popular, if not with being the originator of this; whereas it is beyond doubt that he assailed it and held it up to ridicule. And so well did he do it that the name of "Euphuism" is to this day applied to all extravagant and conceited writing.

"Euphues" is in two books. The first, while it seems to follow all the follies of the time, does so only the better to hit them. It is written in an earnest spirit against many of the abuses of the day—probably it was too earnest to suit his readers—for the second volume conceals its satire under an ironical mask—everything is found to be perfect.

Lyly's plays are in prose, with a few songs here and there. They were written for the court, and seven out of eight are classical. In "Mother Bomby," the scene is laid at Rochester, though the play is modelled—almost copied in some places—from "Plautus."

He is considered to have written some religious tracts—"Pap with a Hatchet" being a violent protest against Martin Mar-prelate.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

1554–1586.

Philip Sidney, son of Sir Henry Sidney, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, was born at Penshurst, in Kent, in the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth. His mother, being sister to the great Earl of Leicester, obtained his patronage for her son. Sent first to school at Shrewsbury, he passed from thence to Oxford and Cambridge, where he attained considerable distinction as a scholar. He then spent some time in travelling abroad, and was among those English Protestants sheltered in the house of the English ambassador on that day of Bartholomew, when so fearful a massacre took place in Paris. Sidney's attractions, both personal and mental, won for him the favour of the queen and court, where he shone as one of the most brilliant; for his intellect was great, and his character noble. If he had a defect, it was that he was possessed of a gravity beyond his years. Sent as ambassador to the new Emperor of Germany, Rudolph II., in 1577, he was made governor of Flushing in 1585; he was mortally wounded in battle the following year, when the incident occurred which has for ever stamped him as one of the most generous and kindly of mankind; for, when on the field of death, he turned away the cooling draught from his own blackened lips to slake the thirst of a dying soldier.

ARCADIA.
DEFENSE OF POESIE.
SONNETS.

The "Arcadia," an heroic romance, was written under the oaks at Wilton, and dedicated to the Countess of Pembroke. It has for its heroes two princes, who, being great friends, travel together and meet with all kinds of adventures. Its pages glow with rich fancy and fine imagery. It was never finished, and was not given to the world till its gifted author had been dead four years. The "Defense of Poesie" is the first ster-

ling piece of criticism in the English language. The growing Puritanism of the age looked down somewhat on poetry. Sidney, therefore, endeavoured to show the value of poetry; that making it was an honourable occupation; and that, when of the highest kind, it possessed great power as a teacher of men.

The love sonnets of Sidney are among the best of their kind. Stella, to whom they were principally addressed, was Lady Penelope Rich.

RALPH HOLINSHED.

Of Holinshed's personal history we have very little account; his

CHRONICLE OF ENGLISH HISTORY

is written in a quaint and interesting manner. It is one of the connecting links between the old chroniclers and modern historians. It quotes largely from other writers, and is valuable as being a faithful reflex of the manners and customs of his time. Shakspeare has drawn largely from this work the materials for his plays of "Macbeth" and "Richard II.;" some passages in the latter being almost literally transcribed.

THOMAS WILSON,

Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and Dean of Durham: wrote in 1553 a "System of Rhetoric and Logic," in which the use of a simple English style is recommended. It is considered to be the first critical work in our language.

ROBERT GREENE.

1560–1592.

PANDOSTO; OR, THE TRIUMPH OF TIME, and other Novelettes.
A GROAT'S WORTH OF WIT.

Greene is better known as a play writer and poet,

than as a prose writer. Of his novelettes the "Pandosto" is the best known. From it Shakspeare borrowed the plot of "The Winter's Tale." The "Groat's Worth of Wit" is a confession of repentance and autobiography, published after his death, which occurred, under miserable circumstances, when he was only 32 years of age.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL,

1560–1595,

A poet and Jesuit priest: wrote one prose piece entitled "A Consolation on the Death of Lord Sackville."

EDMUND SPENSER.

1553–1599.

Spenser, great as a poet, is a prose writer by virtue of his

VIEW OF IRELAND,

written while acting as secretary to Lord Grey de Wilton in 1580. It is a dialogue, and shows no admiration of the Irish people. It also advocates a very strict policy with regard to them.

RICHARD HOOKER.

1553–1600.

Born in Exeter, of parents neither noble nor rich, but of good character. They contrived to give him a decent amount of schooling. As a schoolboy he was remarkable for his continual questioning. Intended by his parents to be a tailor, they were persuaded to allow him to study on; and his uncle, who was rich, sent him to Oxford, where he also obtained considerable help from Bishop Jewel. The death of the latter destroyed his

hopes of advancement. Still, at nineteen he was elected one of the free scholars at Corpus Christi, and in 1579 appointed to read the Hebrew Lecture.

Three months after we find him expelled the University, with his friend Reynolds, for a reason which is not clearly stated, but doubtless a matter of "conscience." Both were, however, some months after, restored. He was appointed preacher at Paul's Cross, then he became Master of the Temple, in which office he continued for some years, and held successively the livings of Boscomb, in Wilts, and Bishop's Bourne, in Kent. Hooker's character was remarkable for its purity; his disposition was gentle, and his piety undoubted.

ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY.

This work was written in defence of the constitution and discipline of the Church of England, against the attacks of the Puritans, and is well accounted "one of the masterpieces of English eloquence." It is clear, vigorous, and logical, and an advance on the generality of English theological composition. It has been "somewhat censured for the great length of its sentences; but the best critics agree in admiring the beauty and dignity of the style, which, woven of honest English words, chosen by no vulgar hand, is yet embroidered with some of the fairest and loftiest figures of poetry. This charm —the ornament of figures—English prose had probably never possessed till Hooker wrote."

THE BIBLE.

1611.

The authorized English version of the Scriptures was the work of the reign of James. Forty-seven persons, in six companies, meeting at Westminster, Oxford, and Cambridge, distributed the labour among them; twenty-five being assigned to the Old Testament, fifteen to the New, seven to the Apocrypha. The rules imposed for

their guidance by the king were designed, as far as possible, to secure the text against any novel interpretation; the translation called "The Bishops' Bible" being established as the basis, as those still older had been in that; and the work of each person or company being subjected to the review of the rest. The translation, which was commenced in 1607, was published in 1611. "The Bishops' Bible" named above, was a translation prepared in the early part of Elizabeth's reign, under the supervision of Archbishop Parker, and published in 1567. "The beautiful simplicity and easy idiomatic flow of the authorized version render it a people's book, and a model for translators; while the strength and dignity of its style have probably operated for good upon English prose writing ever since."

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

1613.

This nobleman was poisoned by Carr, the favourite of James I., with whom he was intimately associated, and by whom he was patronized. The Countess of Exeter also had a share in the shameful transaction, which was but one of many that disgraced the reign of James I.

CHARACTERS.

This book, well written, with flowing grace and of happy expression, is full of ideal pictures of life.

RICHARD HAKLUYT.

1553–1616.

This learned man, born in Herefordshire, was for some time the lecturer on Cosmography or Geography in the University of Oxford. He published

THE PRINCIPAL NAVIGATIONS AND DISCOVERIES OF THE ENGLISH NATION, BY SEA OR OVERLAND, &c., ANYTIME THESE FIFTEEN HUNDRED YEARS.

The work is well written, and especially interesting with regard to the accounts it contains of the travels and researches of the Cabots, father and son, Raleigh, and others, on the newly discovered continent of America, which he visited and helped to colonize.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

1552–1618.

Sir Walter Raleigh, the fourth son of Walter Raleigh, a gentleman of noble family, was born at Hayes, in Devonshire, and educated at Oxford. He entered the army at an early age, and served in France and afterwards in the Netherlands. He also fought in Ireland during the Desmond Rebellion. In 1579 he joined Sir Humphrey Gilbert in an unsuccessful attempt to colonize part of America. Four years afterwards he again set sail for Newfoundland, bent upon a voyage of colonization and discovery, but was obliged to return. In 1584 he, with Gilbert, obtained patents for the colonization of Virginia on the newly discovered continent of America, the fruit of which expedition was the introduction of tobacco and potatoes into this country. He was made M.P. for Devonshire, and was knighted by the queen, with whom he was a prime favourite. He made two more attempts to colonize North America, but without success. In 1587 he sent three ships to Virginia, and the following year greatly distinguished himself in the actions with the Spanish Armada. In 1600 he was sent with Lord Holland on an embassy to Flanders, and there made Governor of Jersey. On James's accession he lost court favour, and the hatred which his successes had caused made open manifestation. He was deprived of his preferments one by one, and accused of high treason, then tried and condem ned to death. There was no legal proof of his guilt, but Attorney-General Coke overruled the jury. This terrible sentence caused the most lively interest to take the

place of enmity. Raleigh was regarded as a hero unjustly accused, and a general cry arose in his favour; the king was therefore obliged to postpone the execution. Conveyed to the Tower the 15th December, 1603, Raleigh underwent a long captivity. The presence of his beloved wife, who had resolved to share his prison, the education of his children, the cultivation of the arts and sciences, afforded him not only consolations but enjoyments; and when, at the end of twelve years, he recovered his liberty, his great soul had lost none of its energy. Quitting prison in 1616—without, however, having been discharged from the sentence—Raleigh desired to deserve entire immunity by new services, and undertook (March 28, 1617) an expedition to Guiana, where his former researches led him to think he should find a gold mine. James, however, to please the Spanish Court, who were jealous of the proceeding, united with it for the purpose of destroying Raleigh. Accused of piracy, and persecuted by Spain and the king, and seeing that he had no chance of obtaining justice in England, Raleigh attempted to escape. Being betrayed, he was arrested, and thrown into prison. Spain demanded his head, and the king granted the demand. His only trouble was to find a legal means. He resolved to revive the sentence that had been passed fifteen years before. Though efforts were made to save his life, the 29th of October, 1618, was fixed for him to die. His execution was one of the most affecting scenes of English history.

HISTORY OF THE WORLD.
NARRATIVE OF HIS CRUISE TO GUIANA.
MAXIMS OF STATE, ADVICE TO HIS SON, &c.

Of Raleigh's works his greatest is the "History of the World," which was written during his long captivity in the Tower. It is esteemed one of the best specimens of the prose of the period in which he lived, and surpasses the works of all previous writers on the same subject in its purity of style, and the dignity with

which it is treated. It is full of sterling information, and illustrates the fables believed in at that time by learned and unlearned unlike. In writing it he must have had access to books and information, and where the history is dependent upon Scripture narrative, the Bible is closely followed.

WILLIAM CAMDEN.

1551–1623.

This antiquary and writer of history, was born in London, and received his higher education at Oxford. Much of his earlier life was spent in connection with Westminster School, in which he was afterwards second and head master. He afterwards became Clarencieux King-at-Arms.

BRITANNIA.
QUEEN ELIZABETH'S REIGN.
GUNPOWDER PLOT.

All these were written in Latin, but translated into English. The first, his great work, and devoted to the antiquities of England, is valuable to the antiquarian and archæologist, and is, perhaps, the best picture of England, as it then was, that we possess.

JAMES I.

1566–1625.

King James I. of England was the author of certain literary works. The only three that are specially remembered, and these rather for the amusement than the instruction which they afford, are:—

DÆMONOLOGIE.
BASILICON DORON.
COUNTERBLAST TO TOBACCO.

The first defends his belief in witches in a learned

dialogue. The second was written in Scotland to leaven Prince Henry's mind with his own views and opinions. And the third is a strenuous but absurd voice against the growing use of tobacco.

FRANCIS, LORD BACON.

1561–1626.

Born in London, son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, he very early manifested a desire for study and research. He was sent to Cambridge at the age of sixteen; and on leaving college he accompanied the English ambassador into France to the court of Henry III. Recalled into his native country by the death of his father, he was called to the bar, and gave himself up to the study of jurisprudence. Nevertheless, preferring the career of public business, he made great efforts to obtain some important employment, and with this view attached himself to the Earl of Essex; he also entered the House of Commons (1592). However, he could not get forward under Elizabeth, although, in order to conciliate the favour of the Queen, he consented to justify the condemnation of the unfortunate Essex, who had been his patron. He received from her the honorary title of Extraordinary Counsellor to the Queen. He consoled himself by cultivating the sciences, and then began the labours which have immortalized his name. After the death of Elizabeth, James I., who loved learned men, rapidly raised Bacon to honours. He was appointed successively Solicitor-General (1607), Attorney-General (1613), Member of the Privy Council (1616), Keeper of the Great Seal (1617), and, lastly, Lord High Chancellor (1618). He was besides made Baron Verulam and Viscount St. Albans.

Impeached by the House of Commons in 1621, for receiving bribes, he was sentenced to pay a fine of £40,000 and sent to the Tower; the punishment was,

however, remitted by the king (James I.). Stripped of all his honours, he retired to Gorhambury, and died through catching cold while making some physical experiments.

Lord Bacon's character has been summed up by Pope in the line,—

"The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind,"

with a certain amount of truth.

It was in money matters that he showed such a deficiency of perception; and this, after all, may be in keeping with his character as a philosopher.

STATE OF EUROPE.
ESSAYS; OR, COUNSELS, CIVIL AND MORAL.
HISTORY OF KING HENRY VII.
THE NEW ATLANTIS.
ON THE ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING: A Treatise.
INSTAURATIO MAGNA.

It is Bacon's philosophical works that have made his name famous. Disgusted when at Cambridge with the mode of reasoning and study in practice there, which failed to satisfy his inquiring mind, he matured during his life a method of philosophical study, the object of which was to establish science upon the sure and certain foundation of experimental observation. This, the Baconian or Inductive Philosophy, is explained in the second part (Novum Organum) of his great work "Instauratio Magna."

The Essays stand among the first and finest works of our English literature. They are specially characterized by the weightiness of their thoughts, their sound critical judgment, and high morality of tone.

Modelled on those of Montaigne, they are far beyond them in character and scope. They were first published in 1597, and again published, with large additions, in 1612; and again, similarly augmented, in 1625, under the title of "Essayes; or, Counsels, Civill and Moral." In the dedication to this edition Lord Bacon writes,—"I do now publish my 'Essayes,' which

of all my other workes have beene most current; for that, as it seemes, they come home to men's businesse and bossomes. I have enlarged them both in number and weight, so that they are indeed a new work." The "Essays" in this their final shape were immediately translated into French, Italian, and Latin.

The "History of the Reign of Henry VII.," published in 1622, is in many ways a masterly work. "With the true philosophic temper, he seeks, not content with a superficial narrative of events, to trace out and exhibit their causes and connections; and hence he approaches to the modern conception of history, as the record of the development of peoples, rather than of the actions of princes and other showy personages."

The "Advancement of Learning" was composed in English, and first published in 1605. Its general object was to take a survey of the whole field of human knowledge, showing its actual state in its various departments, and noting what parts had been cultivated, and what were lying waste, without, however, entering upon the difficult inquiry as to *erroneous methods* of cultivation; his purpose in this work being only "to note omissions and deficiencies," with a view to their being made good by the labours of learned men.

THOMAS DEKKER.

DIED ABOUT 1638.

A dissipated dramatist, of whom little is known beyond that he was a companion of Lyly, and wrote

THE GULL'S HORN BOOK,

a satirical guide to the dissipations and follies of London life.

ROBERT BURTON.

1576–1640.

Born at Lindley, in Leicestershire; educated at Oxford; became rector of Segrave, in the same county.

ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY.

This most quaint book abounds with learned quotations, and shows him to have been familiar with works that were then read by few. Although he wrote it to relieve himself of the deep melancholy fits to which he was subject, it contains other and healthier feelings.

LORD HERBERT OF CHERBURY.

1581–1648.

Born at Eyton, in Shropshire, and educated at Oxford.

LIFE AND REIGN OF HENRY VIII.
DE VERITATE.
MEMOIRS OF HIS OWN LIFE.

The first is considered to be a masterpiece of style. "De Veritate" is the chief of his deistic works, for which he is noted.

JOHN SELDEN.

1584–1654.

An eminent English statesman, born at Sabington, in Sussex; he was educated at Oxford, and studied law in London. In 1624 he became a member of the House of Commons, was determined in his opposition to the court, and was appointed one of the committee which impeached Buckingham in 1626. He was imprisoned in 1628, and was much persecuted by Charles I. He was a member of the Long Parliament, in

which he was distinguished for his moderation, being opposed to the civil war. Though he signed the Covenant in 1644, he refused Cromwell's request to answer the "Eikon Basiliké." He was made keeper of the Records in the Tower, which office he held till his death. Selden was one of the finest characters of his day, obeying no dictation, knowing no party, of a noble and generous disposition.

SEVERAL HISTORIES (in Latin).
A TREATISE ON TITLES OF HONOUR.
HISTORY OF TITHES.

The "Treatise on Titles" is much prized by genealogists and lovers of heraldry. The "History of Tithes" greatly excited the rage of the clergy, and obtained for him a severe rebuke from the king. About twenty years after his death his "Table Talk" was published by his secretary.

JOSEPH HALL.

1574-1656.

Joseph Hall, born in Leicestershire, was Bishop of Norwich. He deserves great praise for his sermons and prose writings, the chief of which are

CONTEMPLATIONS ON HISTORICAL PASSAGES OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS;
OCCASIONAL MEDITATIONS.

JAMES USSHER.

1581-1656.

Born and educated in Dublin, he showed at an early age a remarkable proficiency in study. While Professor of Divinity in Dublin, he became noted as a controversial writer. Made Bishop of Meath, he was promoted to the Archbishopric of Armagh in 1624. In 1641 he fled from Ireland in consequence of the war, and took refuge in Oxford. Being a staunch Royalist, the Parlia-

ment seized on his lands, though he was afterwards voted £400 a year. He was a most eloquent preacher, though his fame chiefly rests on his works, the principal of which are

A TREATISE ON THE POWER OF THE PRINCE AND OBEDIENCE OF THE SUBJECT;
A TREATISE ON STATE AND SUCCESSION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES;
ANNALS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The latter is a valuable chronological work, which gained its author great renown. It is a view of general history from the Creation to the fall of Jerusalem, and on the authority of this work depend the dates found in the margin of our English Bibles.

THIRD PERIOD.

PURITAN INFLUENCE.

THE literature of the Cavaliers and Puritans was as dissimilar as their politics. The former were light, graceful, gay, and polished in their life and manner; the latter rugged, earnest, and solid. With but a few exceptions, as Lord Clarendon, Thomas Fuller, and Jeremy Taylor, the Royalist writers produced but little of a sterling or serious character; a large portion of their works bear the painful stain of immorality, dissipation, and vice. The Puritans, however, grave in dress and manner, with simple tastes, and a thorough knowledge of the Bible, give evidence of all this in their writings. A profound religious thoughtfulness was the root in the character of the English Puritans out of which grew their great works of the pen. The hurry and bloodshed of the civil war were not calculated to foster abstract literature or learning. Controversial writings are prolific enough, and there are other works which appeal to the strong passion of the people for liberty of conscience and freedom of thought and speech.

The Puritan writings are noted for the strong Anglo-Saxon characteristics which they display. It was essentially a prose addressed to the people for their edification. In the higher branches of literature the Puritan writers showed that they had learning, and a few

showed their share in rather a pedantic manner. Milton also used many Latin and Latinized words and forms of expression. But his works and those of others were written for the few. The mass of the works, such as Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," and Baxter's "Saint's Rest," were addressed to the many. They were, therefore, purposely shorn of all that tended to lessen the chance of their being not understood. They are also full of imagery and pictures drawn from every-day life, which rendered them the more acceptable to the people.

The earnest character of the Puritan writings powerfully affected our English prose, and has left a stamp upon it that will never be effaced. The fervour and enthusiasm engendered by strong religious excitement is felt throughout. It has been well and truthfully said that "a massive strength and solemn elevation of tone, form the grand characteristics of a school in which the naked majesty of the Divine perhaps too much overshadows the tenderness and gentleness of the human element. The stern work of those sad times was little fitted to nourish in the breasts of good men those feelings from which bright thoughts and happy sunny affections spring; but the worst enemy of these remarkable men cannot deny, that the mainspring of the Puritan mind, as displayed in written works and recorded actions, was a simple fear of God, and an overmastering desire to fulfil every duty, in the face of any consequences, no matter how perilous or painful."

The period immediately after the civil war, and the final triumph of the Roundheads, was not the best period of Puritan literature by any means. It was not till after the Restoration, and the Cavaliers were again in the ascendant, that it shone out with such lustre. Under trials of no ordinary character, in the face of danger, ejected from their homes and livings for conscience sake, compelled to live in the direst poverty, forbidden to come near a habitation, reduced to live in caves and hiding-places—under all this did the

Puritan divines produce some of their best, soundest, and ever-living works. John Bunyan and Richard Baxter are bright examples, and their works, with others, are undying specimens of the living power of truth and right.

Such a strife as took place between the people and the king could not fail but to be productive of works which discussed the subject of civil government and episcopal right. The minds of the more philosophical writers were directed to the subject of a fixed basis, by which such a contest as that which was raging might be avoided in the future. It seemed that there must be some fixed truths to which all might assent. They were not then arrived at, nor since, nor is it likely that there ever will come a time when it will be found possible to lay down a theory of government to which all classes, with their many differences of opinion, may subscribe. It is well to remember, however, that, in the period now under our notice, the struggle between the people and the king was less against his form of government than against his arbitrary abuse of power. There was no settled hatred to monarchy *per se*, except what grew out of the bitter feelings engendered by the contest. The reign of Elizabeth, just concluded, was one of the happiest of periods; and, therefore, if in the writings of the Puritans is discovered a bitter animosity to monarchy, it was because both extremes had met together. The king had overstretched his power, and fallen into Scylla, on the one hand, while the people had rushed into Charybdis on the other.

Historians had also their work to do. History should be an impartial narrative of facts and occurrences. It is, however, perhaps impossible that any writer could, if he has strong peculiarities and feelings, so completely keep them down as to prevent them tinging, if not pervading, the character of his writings. It is, therefore, necessary that the student of history, before he makes any particular work his study, should consider who and what was his author, and what likelihood there

may be of getting a fair estimate of events from him. All the histories published during this or any other period should have due allowance made for the party feelings and prejudices of the authors.

Just as the political strife produced works in which monarchical and other forms of government were discussed, so the religious warfare was productive of the literature of the pulpit. This was especially the case in the later days of the Puritans, when the Act of Uniformity compelled some two thousand divines to resign their livings, because they could not conscientiously subscribe to it. In such times, and in the absence of many books, the pulpit was, as may be supposed, a great disseminator of news, as well as a formidable instrument in the promulgation of any particular views. The many collections of sermons which characterize this period are naturally so many views of the religio-political discussions of the time. All sides and all opinions are equally represented. Though occupied with much that could only have been interesting at the time of their delivery, they are yet full of learning and piety. Biblical literature received a large accession in the number of commentaries which appeared on the whole or portions of the Scriptures, especially of the Epistles. Nearly every Puritan divine has left behind him, if not a commentary, a quantity of copious marginal notes. Like the sermons, they display an intimate acquaintance with Biblical learning, and great originality of thought.

There was but little fiction written during this period. Present events were too stirring during the civil war for men to take an interest in fictitious scenes and characters, and every-day life was too exciting to need a stimulus. All those who could aid their brothers in the strife, by their pen, chose rather to do so, than to use it in the service of imagination. During the Commonwealth there was little licence allowed, and the line was drawn strait enough; more than ever was it necessary to stand as far away as possible from their antagonists, with their riotings and godlessness. They, however,

"went too far undoubtedly, but they were, in point of morality and religion, at least, on the right side of the dividing line." If they preached godliness and enforced it, they also practised it most devoutly, and the influence was for good. The leaven, bitter as it was to many, spread through the lump, and, though a brief period of mad and reckless jollity and wicked intolerance set in after the Restoration, the powerful impetus given to the advancement of solid and religious learning and writing was felt long after, even down to the present day.

THOMAS FULLER.

1608–1661.

Born at Aldwincle, in Northamptonshire. He received from his father, a clergyman, his first tuition, passing, at the age of thirteen, to Queen's College, Cambridge. Ten years afterwards we find him Fellow of Sidney Sussex. He was appointed Lecturer at the Savoy Chapel, where his eloquent preaching drew large and distinguished audiences. When the civil war broke out, Fuller, though he seems to have acted with moderation, was deprived of his pulpit by the Parliament, and attached himself to the troops under Lord Hopton. With them he wandered about, enduring all the vicissitudes of camp life, until the downfall of the royal cause, when he took up his abode in Exeter, where he lived for some years, engaged in preaching and writing. Coming again to London, and enduring some disappointments, he at last obtained a permanent pulpit at St. Bride's, Fleet Street. He afterwards, having passed the examination of the "Friars," settled down at Waltham Abbey, in Essex, to the rectory of which he had been presented by Lord Carlisle. At the Restoration he received again his lectureship at the Savoy, was

chosen chaplain to the king, and made a D.D. by his University. He was permitted to enjoy these honours but a short time. Scarcely a year afterwards he died of a violent fever, respected, beloved, and honoured by all. Two hundred clergymen followed his remains to the grave.

GOOD THOUGHTS IN BAD TIMES.
GOOD THOUGHTS IN WORSE TIMES.
CHURCH HISTORY OF BRITAIN.
WORTHIES OF ENGLAND.
HISTORY OF THE HOLY WAR.
A PISGAH VIEW OF PALESTINE.
THE HOLY AND PROFANE STATES.
MANY ESSAYS, TRACTS, AND SERMONS.

Fuller is chiefly remembered for his two works, "The Church History of Britain," and "The Worthies of England," the latter being the greatest work. The materials for this were largely collected during his wanderings with the royal army: it is a "quaint delightful collection of literary odds and ends," and deals not alone with the personal history of eminent Englishmen, but with a host of other things connected with the places of their birth and life. About eighteen hundred individuals are thus sketched. His pages sparkle with gems of wit and wisdom. The Church History was condemned in his own day, for its fun and quibble, but its fun is not foul: it has been well called the sweetest-blooded wit that was ever infused into man or book.

JOHN GAUDEN.

1605–1662.

Born at Mayfield, Essex, and educated at St. John's, Cambridge. He was made Bishop of Exeter, under Charles II., and afterwards Bishop of Worcester.

EIKON BASILIKE.

This celebrated book, of which fifty editions were sold in one year, was published a few days after the

death of Charles I., and is a "Portraiture of his most Sacred Majesty in his solitude and sufferings." It seems to be satisfactorily settled that Gauden did write this book, though it was said at the time to have been penned by the king himself. Milton wrote his "Eikonoklastes" in answer to it.

JOHN HOWELL,

1596–1666,

Was born in Carmarthenshire, and spent much of his early manhood in travelling on the Continent, as agent for a glass works; he was afterwards a tutor, and then a government official in 1640. He was made clerk to the council, then imprisoned by the Parliament, and ended his chequered life by becoming historiographer. His

FAMILIAR SKETCHES

are the result of his varied travel and foreign observations. He wrote altogether about forty works. His language is picturesque and lovely.

EDWARD CALAMY.

1600–1666.

Born in London, and educated at Cambridge University, which he entered when only fifteen years of age. He greatly distinguished himself at college, and became chaplain to the Bishop of Ely. He was afterwards appointed one of the lecturers at Bury St. Edmunds, and rector of Rochford, in Essex.

He took a considerable part in the religio-political discussions of his time, opposing the High Church party, and finally separating himself from the Church of England to attach himself to Presbyterianism.

In 1641 he was appointed one of the divines to devise a plan for reconciling the differences that prevailed in

regard to ecclesiastical discipline, which led to the Savoy Conference, in which he also took part. Opposed to Cromwell and the Independents, he did his best to promote the restoration of Charles, from whom he received an offer of the Bishopric of Litchfield and Coventry, which he declined. On the Act of Uniformity being passed, he, with others, resigned his pulpit. Preaching, however, some time after in his old pulpit, he gave offence, and was imprisoned in Newgate for a short time.

SERMONS.

These are the only works that give him a place among the English prose writers. They are highly estimated for the great learning and scholarship which they display.

ABRAHAM COWLEY.

1608–1667.

The son of a well-to-do tradesman, in Cheapside, London, educated first at Westminster, then at Cambridge, of which college he became a fellow.

ESSAYS AND CRITICAL NOTES.

By virtue of these, Cowley, who was essentially a poet, takes a place also among prose writers. His prose is simple but sterling.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

1613-1667.

Taylor was the son of a surgeon-barber, who lived at Cambridge. Having received his elementary education at the Grammar School, he entered Caius College as a Sizar. After he was ordained he came to London, where his powerful preaching attracted the attention of Archbishop Laud, who secured him a fellowship in All Souls College. His advancement was rapid, and in

1637 he was presented by Bishop Juxon with the living of Uppingham, in Rutlandshire. Like Fuller, he was compelled to flee to the army for protection, at the time of the civil war. His rectory being sequestrated, he first shared the fortunes of the army, and then settled down at Newton Hall, Carmarthenshire, where he set up a school in conjunction with a friend. He returned to London in 1657, and in the following year was induced to settle at Lisburn, in the north of Ireland. A Puritan informer having seen him make the sign of the cross in baptism, he was accused before the Irish Council of the act. In 1660, at the Restoration, he was rewarded with the bishopric of Down and Connor, which he held till his death seven years after. He died of a violent fever at Lisburn.

HOLY LIVING AND DYING.
LIFE OF CHRIST.
GOLDEN GROVE.
LIBERTY OF PROPHESYING (PREACHING).
DOCTOR DUBITANTIUM.
SERMONS.

The first is the most popular of Taylor's devotional works. The "Liberty of Prophesying" is an eloquent and pathetic plea for religious toleration, "on a comprehensive basis, and on deep-seated foundations. As a preacher, he had no equal among his predecessors, his sermons being distinguished for intense fervour, for profusion of illustration and poetical ornament, and for the startling and irresistible force of his appeals to the feelings and imagination. When the occasion is such as to call forth his full powers, his eloquence may truly be said to burn like a consuming fire." The last work is considered to be the standard English work on Casuistry. Taylor's style is very ornamental, and marked by the defects peculiar to the time, his sentences being frequently cumbrous and inartistic, and his fertility apt to degenerate into prolixity. His works are full of similes, quotations, and metaphors. Their matter, however, is of sterling quality.

EDWARD HYDE, EARL OF CLARENDON.

1608–1674.

This statesman and historian was born at Dinton, in Wiltshire, and educated at Oxford. After studying law at the Middle Temple, he entered Parliament in 1640. In the civil wars he served the king, who made him Chancellor of the Exchequer and Member of the Privy Council. After the execution of Charles I. he joined his son, and was entrusted by him with important negociations. In 1657 he was created High-Chancellor of England, an office then existing in name only: at his establishment in 1660 the king confirmed him in that dignity, and added the title of Earl of Clarendon. The influence he enjoyed caused him to be hated by the rest of the court, who prevailed on the king, who felt reproached by his virtue and integrity, to disgrace him. He was accordingly deprived of his office, and banished for ever. He retired into France, and died at Rouen.

HISTORY OF THE REBELLION.
ESSAY ON AN ACTIVE AND CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE.

The former work, on which rests his literary fame, is not distinguished by great excellence of style; but, as the narrative of an eye-witness, and one who took part in the mighty contest of those days, it forms a valuable contribution to our historical literature. His sketches of the prominent men of his time are highly interesting, and show great talent. His strong partizanship is displayed, however, throughout his narrative, which makes it to a great extent untrustworthy. But whatever defects, whether of matter or manner, may be alleged against this work, the style is so attractive—has such an equable, easy, and dignified flow—that it can never cease to be popular. "It is a work," says Mr. Arnold, "with which the student of our literature should make himself familiar. It is indeed very long;

but the theme is one deeply interesting, and the revolution which it records has decisively influenced the whole course of our history down to the present day." The "Essay" is also a remarkable work.

JOHN MILTON.

1608–1674.

Milton is to be accredited with several prose works, of which the principal are—

AREOPAGITICA: A SPEECH FOR THE LIBERTY OF UNLICENSED PRINTING;
A TRACTATE ON EDUCATION;
EIKONOKLASTES; OR, THE IMAGE-BREAKER;
HISTORY OF ENGLAND TO THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

The poetry of Milton takes so high a place in literature, that the prose is overshadowed and forgotten, and yet it is of the best order, and no way inferior in originality of thought, in classical structure, or elegance of style. The matter is thoroughly English, and passages of the most sublime eloquence abound. It has been characterized by Macaulay as "a perfect field of cloth of gold, stiff with gorgeous embroidery."

The "Areopagitica," though a mere pamphlet, is full of weighty thoughts, and is a valuable contribution to political science. It is an argument for the freedom of the press, and is perhaps the most eloquent—certainly one of the least rugged—among the prose works of Milton.

ISAAC BARROW.

1630–1677.

Born in London, the son of a linendraper. Studied at Cambridge, where he became Master of Trinity, Vice-Chancellor, and Professor of Mathematics. He is noted for his mathematical, chemical, astronomical, and theo-

logical works, which are written with care, and give evidence of study and thought. The former are in Latin; the latter consist of sermons and treatises on various subjects.

ANDREW MARVEL.

1620–1678.

Born in Lincolnshire, and educated at Cambridge. For some time after he left college he travelled, and acted as Secretary to the English Embassy at Constantinople. He became, in 1657, assistant-secretary to John Milton, and was elected M.P. for Hull, in which position he is said to have refused a bribe of £1000, offered to him by Charles II.

POPERY AND ARBITRARY GOVERNMENT IN ENGLAND.

This treatise, the greatest effort of his pen, is marked by sound opinions, and is written in the clear practical manner common to the Puritanic age.

THOMAS HOBBES.

1588–1679.

Born at Malmesbury, and educated at Oxford. For some time he travelled on the Continent as tutor to the Earl of Devonshire, who made him his secretary on their return to England. He was also for some time teacher of mathematics to the Prince of Wales, then living in forced retirement at Paris. At the Restoration, Charles bestowed upon his late tutor a pension of £100 per annum. The latter part of his life was spent in the retirement of Chatsworth, and in the enjoyment of the friendship of the most distinguished men of the day. He possessed great genius, but was arrogant and dogmatic.

LEVIATHAN.

This work is the principal one that came from Hobbes's pen. It is a series of treatises on metaphysical and political subjects. The theories which he advocates are those of absolute monarchy, of self-care being the motive of all human actions, and that good and evil are mere relative terms.

In whatever way his opinions may be regarded, but one exists as to his abilities as a writer. He is profound yet clear, solid yet brilliant, original but not conceited. His style is fine, manly, and thoroughly English.

"Impartial minds will always rank Hobbes amongst the greatest writers England has produced; and by writers we do not simply mean masters of language, but also masters of thought. His style, as mere style, is in its way as fine as anything in English; it has the clearness of crystal, and it has also the solidity and brilliancy. Nor is the matter unworthy of this form. It is original, in the sense of having been passed through the alembic of his brain, even when perhaps the property of others. Although little of it could now appear novel, it was novel when he produced it."

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

1605–1682.

Born in London, the son of a merchant of good means, he studied at Oxford, and afterwards travelled through France and Italy, and then practised as a physician at Norwich for the remainder of his life. He was knighted by Charles II.

RELIGIO MEDICI; OR, THE RELIGION OF A PHYSICIAN.
PSEUDODOXIA EPIDEMICA; OR, VULGAR ERRORS.
HYDRIOTAPHIA; OR, URN BURIAL.

Browne was eccentric both as a man and a writer. He wrote in the affected manner of his day, and with the pedantry which to this day characterizes writers in the medical profession. His writings are cumbrous and pedantic, but good.

The first work, entitled "Religio Medici"—the Religion of a Physician—published in 1635, contains innumerable odd opinions on things spiritual and temporal. The "Vulgar Errors" displays great eloquence, learning, and shrewdness, in exposing the erroneous sources of many commonly received opinions. The "Hydriotaphia" is a discourse upon some sepulchral urns dug up in Norfolk. It is the most celebrated of all his works. In it the author speculates upon the vain hopes of immortality cherished by men respecting their worldly names and deeds, since all that remains of those buried in the Norfolk urns is a little dust, to which no name, nor the remotest idea as to individual character, can be attached. Many of his thoughts on this subject are truly sublime, and the whole are conveyed in the most impressive language.

OWEN FELTHAM

Is the author of some curious essays on moral and religious subjects, entitled

THE RESOLVES, Published in 1628.

IZAAK WALTON.

1593–1683.

Born at Stafford, afterwards a linendraper in Cornhill, and then in Fleet Street, London. After retiring from business in 1643, he spent his time in following his favourite pursuits of fishing and writing. His works are:—

THE COMPLETE ANGLER; OR, CONTEMPLATIVE MAN'S RECREATION;
THE LIVES OF DONNE, WORTON, HOOKER, GEORGE HERBERT, AND BISHOP SANDERSON.

The first is a delightful book, "redolent of wild

flowers and sweet country air." All his writings are characterized by the beautiful simplicity with which the noblest thoughts are expressed.

JOHN OWEN,

1616–1683,

Born at Stadham, in Oxfordshire, was a leading Nonconformist divine, and an amiable and learned man. Cromwell, of whom he was a special favourite, made him Vice-Chancellor of Oxford.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE HEBREWS.
A DISCOURSE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
THE DIVINE ORIGINAL OF THE SCRIPTURES.

These are the more noticeable of his many writings, all of which show an absence of grace, and great stiffness of style.

ALGERNON SIDNEY,

1621–1683,

The son of the Earl of Leicester, served as colonel in the Parliamentary army, though opposed to Cromwell's assumption of power. After the Restoration he spent eighteen years in exile on the Continent. Receiving a pardon from the king, he returned to England, but his opposition to the king and court was such, that he was condemned and beheaded on a charge of conspiracy.

DISCOURSES ON GOVERNMENT.

These were written to oppose the doctrine of the divine right of kings, and were not published till fifteen years after his death. They are chiefly designed to show the necessity of a balance between the popular and the monarchical parts of a mixed government, and have obviously a particular reference to the political evils of his own time, to which, unfortunately, he was himself a victim. It was Sidney's wish to see a republic in

England, and for that object he laboured all his life, "not wisely, but too well." The above work is the only important work of Sidney's that has come to us.

HENRY MORE.

1614–1687.

More lived a retired and hermit-like life at Cambridge, where he busied himself with the more mysterious subjects of metaphysical philosophy, such as

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS AND INIQUITY;
THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

RALPH CUDWORTH.

1617-1688.

Regius professor of Hebrew at Cambridge. He published in 1678 the first part of a celebrated metaphysical treatise, refuting the material and atheistic philosophy of Hobbes. It is called

THE TRUE INTELLECTUAL SYSTEM OF THE UNIVERSE;
ETERNAL AND IMMUTABLE MORALITY.

The latter work appeared after his death. There are a number of this writer's MSS. works preserved in the British Museum.

JOHN BUNYAN.

1628–1688.

Bunyan, John, an English Baptist preacher, the son of a tinker, followed his father's trade, and for some time, according to his own account, led a wandering and dissipated life. While serving as a soldier in the Parliamentarian army he became religious, and devoted himself to the work of preaching. At the Restoration he was accused of sedition, and imprisoned in Bedford

Gaol for twelve years, where he divided his time between writing books and tagging stay-laces, for the support of himself and family. He died in London, and lies buried in Bunhill-Fields burial-ground.

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.
GRACE ABOUNDING TO THE CHIEF OF SINNERS.
HOLY WAR.

These are the works by which he is chiefly known. The first, an allegory—the object of which is to represent, under the figure of a journey taken by a pilgrim, the course of a Christian's life through this world to that which is to come—is one of the finest pieces of Saxon prose we have. It was first published in 1678, and so great was its success that it ran through ten editions in seven years. The second is a sort of religious autobiography; and the last an allegory quite as fervid but not so well known as the "Pilgrim's Progress." Both the "Pilgrim's Progress" and the "Holy War" display a characteristic reality in the depiction of events narrated. In reading them it is difficult to feel that the personages are fictitious, and all their doings only the creation of the author's imagination. It is this power of placing fiction so as to appear like reality that puts Bunyan side by side with Defoe. Bunyan had, however, an object to serve besides the mere pleasure of the reader—he desired to strike home certain truths. "And," says Mr. Arnold, "what simple, equable, sinewy English the 'inspired tinker' writes! what fulness of the Christian doctrine is in him! what clear insight into many forms of the Christian character! what thorough understanding of a vast variety of temptations, fleshly and spiritual."

RICHARD BAXTER.

1615–1691.

Born at Rowton, in Shropshire, where his father was possessed of a small freehold, he was early educated

for the ministry of the Church of England by private study. He became Master of the Dudley Free Grammar-School when only twenty-three years of age; and then settled down in the parish of Kidderminster. When the civil war broke out he became a chaplain in the Roundhead army, not because he hated royalty, but because of his dislike to the conduct of the king. After the Restoration he was offered the bishopric of Hereford, which he declined; and when the Act of Uniformity was passed, he laid down his living, with two thousand other ministers, rather than take the oath. He lived for some years at Acton, in Middlesex, in close companionship with his friend and shelterer, Matthew Hale. He was, however, tried before the brutal Jeffreys, found guilty, and condemned in a heavy fine. Unable to pay it, he lay for eighteen months in prison, till just before the last Revolution. Baxter was one of the most powerful of preachers, drawing crowds of rich and poor to hear him. His constitution was a feeble one, and his health always delicate.

SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST.
A CALL TO THE UNCONVERTED.
A NARRATIVE OF HIS OWN LIFE AND TIME.

These works are the principal, out of the large number of one hundred and sixty, that came from his pen, all on Divinity. His writings are in a good Saxon style, like those of Bunyan and of all writers at that time who addressed the people. They are full of the choicest and most glowing imagery, and abound in passages of hearty eloquence. The "Saint's Rest" will always be a popular work. The "Narrative of his own Life" is highly esteemed.

ROBERT BOYLE,

1627–1691,

Son of the Earl of Cork, was born at Lismore. One of the original members of the Royal Society, he was

distinguished for his researcnes into chemistry and natural philosophy.

OCCASIONAL REFLECTIONS ON SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

Although the writer of numerous works, consisting of philosophical treatises and religious works, the above is the only one of note. Swift caricatured it in his "Meditation on a Broomstick."

JOHN TILLOTSON,

1630–1694,

Was the son of a Puritan tradesman at Sowerby, near Halifax. At Cambridge, where he was educated, he changed his religious views and entered the Church of England. He became a celebrated preacher at the church of St. Lawrence, Old Jewry, and was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury at the close of the Revolution, but only held the primacy for three years.

SERMONS.

These sermons are among the standard works to be found on the library shelves of clergymen. They are in good strong sensible English, practical in their matter, plain as to style, and without much literary polish. They were not published till after his death, being bequeathed by his will as the sole property with which he was able to endow his widow. On account of his great celebrity as a divine, they were purchased by a bookseller for no less than two thousand five hundred guineas.

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE.

1628-1699.

Born in London, and noted principally for his efforts as the negociator of the Triple Alliance, his scheme to settle the perplexed affairs of Charles II. by a Council

of Thirty, and as the English Envoy at the Hague who arranged the marriage between William and Mary. He lived with Swift, as his secretary, for some time at Moor Park, Surrey.

ESSAYS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

These essays are among the most delightful prose works of English literature. Their ring is musical and clear, and they set their ideas before the reader in a smooth, polished, yet learned and original manner. The most noted are those on Government, Learning, and one on the Netherlands. He also wrote a small work on Gardening.

EDWARD STILLINGFLEET.

1635–1699.

Some time Bishop of Worcester; he wrote some excellent works,

A DEFENCE OF THE TRINITY;
A RATIONAL ACCOUNT OF REVEALED RELIGION;
SERMONS;

being the principal. The Sermons are full of sound sense, and remarkable for their forcible style.

FOURTH PERIOD.

FRENCH INFLUENCE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the efforts of the Puritans, the moral atmosphere of court life during the reign of Charles the Second was blighted and full of poison. At the Restoration the long restraint which the asceticism of the Commonwealth had forced upon the people was replaced by an opposite extreme of open profanity. An unappeasable desire for amusement succeeded the long abstinence which the Puritans had compelled—a desire which is natural to man, and the very crushing of which but adds to its intensity and longing. The nation, relieved of the restraint, plunged with a sort of madness into all manner of folly and vice, over which there was not the slightest attempt to throw a veil, even of the most flimsy character. The Cavaliers rejoiced "that the king had got his own again," and showed their joy over the party that had so long kept him out of his inheritance by doing that which they knew to be specially offensive to them. More than "an utter absence of shame marked the mode of life;" a positive glory was taken in its "inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming and all dissoluteness," and under such leadership as that of the king and his court, what wonder is it that, during the five-and-twenty years in which it went on, "the poison should spread right and left, sinking down to the lowest classes of the people?

and still less wonder that such shameless undisguised licentiousness should be faithfully reflected in the plays and the books which were written in the hope of extracting smiles and gold from the beautiful profligates and high-born gamesters who surrounded the sullied throne?"

The greater part of the literature of the Restoration reflected very forcibly the social and political characteristics of the age, just as the Puritan literature was a faithful reflex of the hopes, aspirations, stern piety, and religious fanaticism of the Commonwealth.

The king brought with him from France influences, fashions, and vices which soon made themselves palpably felt. The fluency, vivacity, and elegance of the French writers appealed with greater success to the tastes of the court than did those of the more homely, but more honest and sterling, writers of England. Accordingly, those writers who wrote for a living, for patronage, for place, for power, suited themselves as best they might to the tastes of their courtly readers.

The new style, which was introduced as the "style of civilized Europe as regulated by the most authoritative rules of antiquity," was to replace the rugged but tender manner of the English literature, which was considered as "too homely for polished society." Latin and sophistry forced fancy and plain speaking into the background; sentiment and beauty gave way to artificial but "lifeless images, borrowed from the pastorals of antiquity." Criticism of the outward manner and form took the place of search for hidden truth and meaning. Such was the French influence, which sought, with quibbles of expression and wordiness, to turn aside the steady onward march of our literature.

It stood, however, the trial; the leaven of earnestness was never quite exhausted; the salt of manliness never quite lost its savour. It had its mission to fulfil; and its own strength, the growth of centuries, its oneness of purpose, alone saved it from becoming a mere vehicle

for pleasantry, a form of words without the life of sense and meaning. More than that, the very effort which might have retarded did but prepare it for the time, shortly to arrive, when it was to become an engine of popular power and an influence for popular good. As society shook off the licentiousness and follies of the age of the Stuarts, while it retained the freedom of manner and closer connection between the various classes of society which was equally characteristic of it, so the literature threw off the restraint which had been put upon it, while it added to its own originality and nervous force a certain elegance in the choice and expression of words. The quaint formal Latinized style of the Elizabethan and Puritan era was replaced by a more idiomatic structure, more balanced periods, and melodious inflexion. This made literature more suited to the popular taste.

It was essentially a period of transition, both in style as well as in character—the ease, forcibility, and originality of the previous era giving place to the artificiality and cold accuracy which marked the literature of the eighteenth century. The people had become much more of a power in the State, and had become better educated and critical: it soon, therefore, became necessary to supply them with books, and authors began to find out that they were no bad patrons.

It was, however, some time before the notion became exploded, that the great body of the people had no interest in the better class of literary works; or that to treat of inferior subjects, was beneath the dignity of authors. The operations of the Press began to display much more alacrity, and men of the very best talent began to use their powers upon various other prose subjects than history, philosophy, or divinity, which were the only classes of literature that had been cultivated to any purpose. Andrew Fuller and Izaak Walton are fair specimens of the first miscellaneous writers, the list of which soon included others of greater reputation. All this paved the way for a new and peculiar kind of

literature, which, while it may be to a certain extent traced to French influence, is, in its essential characteristics, original.

Sheets of news and newspapers had been established in London and other large cities since the time of the civil war; but the idea of issuing a periodical sheet "commenting on the events of private life, and the dispositions of ordinary men, was never before entertained either in England or elsewhere."

It was now that a writer for the first time undertook to meet his readers several times a week with a short article, which had generally for its subject some circumstance that had taken place in society, or was a short tale or allegory. The "Tatler," the first of these sheets, was originated by Sir Richard Steele, who was soon joined by Addison, and followed by Johnson and others. The object of the "Tatler" was, as stated by Steele, "to expose the false arts of life, to pull off the disgraces of cunning, vanity, and affectation, and to recommend a general simplicity in our dress, our discourse, and our behaviour." There was also a portion of the paper set apart for news and intelligence of a political and public character.

The price of the "Tatler" was one penny. When it had reached the 271st number it merged into the more celebrated "Spectator," in which the writers strictly preserved their incognito. The latter was published daily, in the form of a single leaf, and in each number was a complete essay. Its largest edition was 1680, and its chief writers were Steele, Addison, Tickell, and others.

The "Spectator," which extended to 635 numbers, or eight volumes, is not only much superior to the "Tatler," but stands at the head of all the works of the same kind that have since been produced; and, as a miscellany of polite literature, is not surpassed by any book whatever. All that regards the smaller morals and decencies of life, elegance or justness of taste, and the improvement of domestic society,

is touched upon in this paper with the happiest combination of seriousness and ridicule; it is also entitled to the praise of having corrected the existing style of writing and speaking on common topics, which was much vitiated by slang phraseology and profane swearing.

Though these essays were addressed to the general public, it was the upper classes that most extensively patronized them: still it was an advance onward, and, all things considered, a remarkable one. Following close upon the essays, came Defoe with his papers and appeals to the people, and the novelists with their branch of literature, which has almost run every other branch completely out of the field.

The period embraced between the years 1700 and 1730, and which saw Steele, Addison, Pope, Newton, and others in their glory and prime, has also been styled the Augustan era of English literature, on account of its supposed resemblance, in intellectual wealth, to the age of the Emperor Augustus.

"This opinion has not been followed or confirmed in the present age. The praise due to good sense, and a correct and polished style, is allowed to the prose writers, and that due to a felicity in painting artificial life, is awarded to the poets; but modern critics seem to have agreed to pass over these qualities as of secondary moment, and to hold in greater estimation the writings of the times preceding the Restoration, and of our own day, as being more boldly original, both in style and in thought, more imaginative, and more sentimental. The 'Edinburgh Review' appears to state the prevailing sentiment in the following sentences—'Speaking generally of that generation of authors, it may be said that, as poets, they had no force or greatness of fancy, no pathos, and no enthusiasm, and, as philosophers, no comprehensiveness, depth, or originality. They are sagacious, no doubt, neat, clear, and reasonable; but, for the most part, cold, timid, and superficial.' The same critic represents it as their chief praise that they

corrected the indecency, and polished the pleasantry and sarcasm, of the vicious school introduced at the Restoration. 'Writing,' he continues, 'with infinite good sense, and great grace and vivacity, and, above all, writing for the first time in a tone that was peculiar to the upper ranks of society, and upon subjects that were almost exclusively interesting to them, they naturally figured as the most accomplished, fashionable, and perfect writers which the world had ever seen, and made the wild, luxuriant, and humble sweetness of our earlier authors, appear rude and untutored in the comparison.' While there is general truth in these remarks, it must, at the same time, be observed, that the age produced several writers, who, each in his own line, may be called extraordinary. Satire, expressed in forcible and copious language, was certainly carried to its utmost pitch of excellence by Swift. The poetry of elegant and artificial life was exhibited, in a perfection never since attained, by Pope. The art of describing the manners, and discussing the morals of the passing age, was practised, for the first time, and with unrivalled felicity, by Addison."

DRYDEN.

1631–1700.

Ranking among the first poets as he does, it is only necessary to allude here to the few pieces of prose that came from his pen. These consist of—

AN ESSAY ON DRAMATIC POESY;
PREFACES AND DEDICATIONS.

These are all written with great brilliancy and elaboration. In the essay, he labours to prove, without much result, that poetry is a fitting medium for tragedy. In the latter pieces he discusses, in a polished manner, and

with great taste, the various topics of literature and art. These are the first easy and graceful essays upon the lighter departments of literature which appeared in England. Dr. Johnson describes them as airy, animated, and vigorous. In the essay, he has drawn characters of his dramatic predecessors, which are allowed to be unsurpassed, in spirit and precision, by any later or more laborious criticisms.

SAMUEL PEPYS,

1703,

Was the son of a London tailor. He became Secretary to the Admiralty. His

DIARY

is a most amusing picture of the life of the time, detailing most minutely the dinners, parties, dress, and fashion. The diary was written in shorthand.

JOHN LOCKE.

1632–1704.

Born at Wrington, near Bristol, and educated first at Westminster School, and afterwards at Oxford. It was intended that he should follow the profession of medicine. Becoming, however, connected with the celebrated Earl of Shaftsbury, he followed that nobleman into exile, when he fled to Holland, in 1682. He returned to England in 1688, and was appointed one of the commissioners of appeal, with a salary of £200 a year. While acting as tutor in Lord Shaftsbury's family, he superintended the education of his grandson, the author of the "Characteristics."

For some time previous to his death, he lived in Essex, at the house of Sir Francis Masham. He was a

man of extraordinary ability; but of singularly amiable character, and perfect simplicity of manners.

ESSAY CONCERNING THE HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.
LETTERS ON TOLERATION.
CONDUCT OF THE UNDERSTANDING.
THOUGHTS CONCERNING EDUCATION.
TWO TREATISES ON CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

Locke, following in the footsteps of Bacon, found the scholastic mode of reasoning at Oxford repugnant to him. His great work, "Essay on the Understanding," has for its theory that, in the investigation of natural phenomena, the same principle of observation and experience should be applied, as Bacon had applied to the researches in natural science. The success of the book was very great, and it still continues an undisputed text-book in our colleges.

Locke wrote other works, distinguished for their enlightened views, and liberal and tolerant principles, of which the most noted are those given above.

JOHN RAY.

1628–1705.

A blacksmith's son at Black Notley, in Essex, and a great naturalist. Wrote two sterling works,

THE GENERAL HISTORY OF PLANTS;
THE WISDOM OF GOD IN THE WORKS OF CREATION.

The latter is a popular work of great merit.

JOHN EVELYN.

1620–1706.

Born of good fortune and parentage in London, he spent his leisure time in making science popular. He was one of the most zealous members of the Royal Society, then in its infancy.

It was at his beautiful house and grounds at Deptford, that Peter the Great, of Russia, lived when over here.

SYLVA.
TERRA.
A DIARY.

The first contains an account of forest trees and their uses; the second is on agriculture; and the third, but most interesting, is his diary, which lays before us, with great clearness, English life of the time of Charles the Second.

WILLIAM SHERLOCK,

1641–1707,

Dean of St. Paul's, and a celebrated divine; wrote

A PRACTICAL DISCOURSE CONCERNING DEATH;
VINDICATION OF THE TRINITY;
ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

He is chiefly remembered for his bitter writings against the Dissenters, and his controversy with Dr. South.

THOMAS SPRAT,

1636–1713,

Bishop of Rochester, born in Devonshire, and educated at Oxford. Wrote

A HISTORY OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY;
AN ACCOUNT OF THE RYE-HOUSE PLOT;
A SHORT LIFE OF COWLEY;

all of which are elegant in style.

EARL OF SHAFTSBURY.

1671–1713.

Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftsbury, was born in London. He was the grandson of the celebrated Cabal Ashley, who placed him when a boy under the care of Locke. He attracted considerable attention in the reign of Anne. Died while at Naples.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MEN, MANNERS, OPINIONS, AND TIMES.

This is a collection of his numerous writings concerning the operations of the human mind, and was published in three volumes immediately after his death. The style is melodious and elegant, but somewhat laboured.

It contains much acute remark and fine sentiment; but, though favourable to natural religion, it is slightly tinged with scepticism regarding revelation, and, upon the whole, somewhat fantastic. "The great point of his philosophy is that there exists a 'moral sense,' by which virtue and vice—things naturally and fundamentally distinct—are discriminated and at once approved of or condemned, without reference to the self-interest of him who judges."

MATTHEW HENRY,

1662–1714,

Was born in Flintshire, brought up to the law, and afterwards became a Dissenting minister.

A COMMENTARY ON THE BIBLE,

which he left unfinished, is the chief work by which he is remembered.

THOMAS BURNET,

1635–1715,

Master of the Charterhouse ; wrote

THE SACRED THEORY OF THE EARTH,

and other works, which are remarkable only for their splendid eloquence. Their opinions are valueless, and they are full of errors and superstition.

GILBERT BURNET.

1643–1715.

Burnet was born at Edinburgh, and educated for the Church at Glasgow University, where he was for some time Professor of Divinity. He came to London in 1674, where he commenced writing, and soon attracted considerable notice. A thorough Protestant, when James II. ascended the throne he retired to Holland, where he took a considerable part in promoting the Revolution. On the accession of William of Orange he was made Bishop of Salisbury.

HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION.
HISTORY OF MY OWN TIMES.

Both these works are exceedingly valuable, and characterized by natural and vigorous writing. The former is said to be the first historical work in our own language that is supplemented and confirmed by an appendix of documents. The latter is remarkable for the fidelity and discrimination shown in the portraiture of the men with whom he was connected in political and religious life. Though ill-arranged and inaccurate, it is yet, owing to its contemporary character, a valuable original source of information for the period between the Restoration and 1713.

ROBERT SOUTH,

1633–1716,

The son of a London merchant, was born at Hackney, and educated at Oxford, where he became public orator. He was rector of Islip, in Oxfordshire, and chaplain to Chancellor Clarendon. His

SERMONS,

by which he is remembered, are a strange compound of divinity and wit, learning and malice. He was an extreme Royalist and Churchman, and held Nonconformists and Roundheads in equal abhorrence. He maintained what are called High Church principles; that is to say, defended the ancient privileges and doctrines of the Church against every attempt at reducing or altering them.

WILLIAM PENN,

1644–1718,

Son of the celebrated Admiral Penn, and distinguished as having founded the State of Pennsylvania, in the United States; wrote several treatises in defence of Quakerism.

NO CROSS, NO CROWN.
THE CONDUCT OF LIFE.
A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE PEOPLE CALLED QUAKERS.

JOSEPH ADDISON.

1672–1719.

Addison was the son of a clergyman, who at the time of his birth was rector of Milston, near Amesbury, in Wiltshire, and who afterwards became Dean of Lichfield. Being sent to the Charterhouse, London, to be educated, he there made the acquaintance of Richard Steele. When fifteen years old he left the Charter-

house for Queen's College, Oxford, where he covered himself with distinction by his Latin poems, and won a scholarship in Magdalen. Addison was intended for the Church, but was persuaded that there was more chance of getting on in connection with the State, and some fortunate verses in honour of the king obtained recognition, first from Lord Somers, and then from their royal subject, and the writer received a pension of £300 a year, and travelling expenses, that he might cultivate and improve his taste by travel on the Continent. The travelling expenses were, however, cut off in a year or two, and at King William's death the pension was stopped also, and Addison had "to wait quietly for fortune in a shabby lodging, up two pair of stairs, in the Haymarket."

When the news of the battle of Blenheim reached England, Addison was engaged by the Lord Treasurer Godolphin to write a poem on the event. This he did with such satisfaction to everyone, that he soon found himself on the road to honour. In the course of the next twelve years he was made Commissioner of Appeals, then Under-Secretary for Ireland, then Secretary for Ireland, and then, in the year 1717, one of the principal Secretaries of State. About a year before the latter appointment he married the Countess Dowager of Warwick, and took up his residence at Holland House. The marriage was not attended with very happy consequences. She was a dashing woman, fond of show and rank; he was of a quiet disposition, cold and polished in manner. Whether to this, or to the habits of the age, may be attributed the cause of the unfortunate love of liquor which soon after displayed itself, it is difficult to say. It is certain, however, that his fair name and reputation is sullied by such a stain. Through the decay of his health, he was compelled to retire from office, with a pension of £1500 a year. His bodily infirmities increased, and, soon after, his brilliant life came to a close, at the early age of forty-eight.

PAPERS IN THE "TATLER" AND "SPECTATOR."

Addison's fame as a writer rests principally upon these contributions, and to him we may ascribe the "formation of a style truly classical and pure, whose simplicity and grace have not yet been surpassed; and which, presenting a model of unprecedented elegance, laid the foundation for a general and increasing attention to the beauty and harmony of composition.

"His critical powers were admirably adapted to awaken and inform the public mind; to teach the general principles by which excellence may be attained; and, above all, to infuse a relish for the noblest productions of taste and genius."

In all his writing he aimed—and steadily kept his aim in view—at improving and making better and wiser his readers, teaching and disseminating a love for morality and religion.

For the "Spectator," Addison was a constant writer, and mainly contributed to its success. His papers were marked with one of the four letters, C.L.I.O. The Essays on "Milton," the Vision of "Mirza," and the account of Sir Roger de Coverly, are some of the finest.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

1642-1727.

This illustrious English astronomer was born on the estate of Woolsthorp, near Grantham, in Lincolnshire. At an early period he showed an astonishing application to study, and a decided taste for mathematics and mechanics. In 1660 he was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge, of which he afterwards became a fellow. While there he had for his mathematical teacher the celebrated Dr. Barrow; and, before he was 23 years of age, he made his greatest discoveries in mathematics. In 1665 he left Cambridge to avoid the plague, and retired to Woolsthorp. There, on observing an apple fall from a tree, he formed the first idea of the law of gravitation and of the system of the world. In 1669 he succeeded

Dr. Barrow as Lucasian professor of mathematics. In 1672 he was admitted a member of the Royal Society of London. In the ensuing years he communicated to that society the results of some of his labours. In 1687 he was commissioned by the University of Cambridge to defend its privileges, assailed by King James II. The following year the University elected him as its representative in the House of Commons. He was a member of that parliament which excluded James II. from the throne (1688), and was again elected in 1701. In 1692 his reason appears to have been for a time somewhat shaken, consequent most likely upon overwork, although some say on account of the loss of valuable papers, burned through the upsetting of a candle upon them by his dog Diamond. In 1695 he received an appointment as Warden of the Mint, a post worth about £600 a year. This he held for four years, when he was promoted to be Master, with a salary of more than double that of Warden.

Honours crowded upon him towards the end of his life. Of these the chief were his election in 1703 as President of the Royal Society, which office was conferred on him every succeeding year until his death; and his knighthood in 1705, under the royal hand of "good Queen Anne." His long life, more fruitful, perhaps, in great wonders of scientific discovery than that of any other man in ancient or modern times, came to a close at Kensington, when he had passed his eighty-fourth year.

PRINCIPIA.
OPTICS: A TREATISE OF LIGHT.
OBSERVATIONS ON THE BOOK OF DANIEL AND ON THE APOCALYPSE OF ST. JOHN.
CHRONOLOGY OF ANCIENT KINGDOMS AMENDED.

The "Principia; or, Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy," was written in Latin, and first published by order, and at the expense, of the Royal Society, to whom it had been recommended by Halley, the astronomer. It is intended to explain a new system

of philosophy, based upon geometry, by which the grander operations of nature and the movements of the planets are shown to be governed by and dependent upon fixed rules, which also regulated the smallest particles of matter.

Newton, like many students of natural science, was deeply fascinated by the profound and mysterious prophecies of the Bible. The "Observations on Daniel" is a fair specimen not only of Newton's literary power, but illustrates the depth of his religious feeling. Both the "Observations" and the "Chronology" were published after the author's death.

SAMUEL CLARKE.

1675–1729.

Born at Norwich, and educated at Cambridge, where he attained the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Entering the Church, he held important livings both in Norwich and London, where he was rector of St. James's, Westminster. He was possessed of great mental endowments, and a man of singularly virtuous character. His devotion to his sacred office may be gathered from the fact that he refused the lucrative office of Master of the Mint, which became vacant by the death of his friend Newton.

PARAPHRASES ON THE FOUR GOSPELS.
SERMONS ON THE BEING AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.
THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.
EXPOSITION OF THE CHURCH CATECHISM.
NATURAL AND REVEALED RELIGION.
THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

All these range among the best theological and metaphysical works in the English language. The "Essay on the Being and Attributes of God" is an *à priori* argument.

SIR RICHARD STEELE.

1671–1729.

At the time of his birth at Dublin, his father was acting as private secretary to the Duke of Ormond. He was sent to be educated at the Charterhouse, where was formed the long and close friendship with Addison, whom he joined at Merton College, Oxford, where he only spent a short time, leaving without a degree. He then, either for a freak or attracted by the uniform, enlisted as a private soldier in the Horse-Guards, and lost a fortune, for a wealthy Irish relative cut his name out of his will when he heard of such a reckless proceeding. Lord Ormond, however, his captain, obtained a cornetcy for him; he became secretary to Colonel Lord Cutts, and rose to the rank of captain in Lucas's Fusiliers.

Steele lived a wild life, but was not without his good points, and his good companionship won him a host of friends; in 1707 he was made First Gazetteer, and then Commissioner of Stamps. He was an ardent politician, became a member of the House of Commons, and a friend of the Whigs, to whose party he did great service. Under the Tory ministry of Queen Anne he was expelled from the House as a libeller; but under George I. he entered parliament again as member for Boroughbridge, Yorkshire, and was appointed Surveyor of the Royal Stables, Governor of the Royal Comedians, and was knighted. His irregular life, however, reduced him to great pecuniary distress. He died in Wales, of paralysis, and dependent upon the bounty of his creditors.

THE CHRISTIAN HERO.
SEVERAL COMEDIES.
PAPERS IN THE "TATLER," "SPECTATOR," "GUARDIAN," "THE CRISIS," AND OTHER POLITICAL PAMPHLETS.

The first work was a serious and religious book, written during his wild life about town, and intended

as an apology. "But his only reward was the laughter of the town; for the idea of a fast-living soldier, who could never resist the attractions of the Rose Tavern, or the delight of beating the watch at midnight, appearing in print as a religious character, seemed to have in it something irresistibly comic." Yet for the time Steele was doubtless sincere in his intentions of reform.

He shortly afterwards appeared as the author of three comedies of a second-rate character: the failure of one, "The Sober Lover," caused him to give up play-writing in disgust. Two years afterwards, in 1709, appeared the first number of the "Tatler," which marked the birth of a new branch in English literature, and earned for its author and originator the title of the father of Periodical literature. The "Tatler" was a penny sheet, which gave a short article, with scraps of news, and came out three times a week. It continued for two years, when it ceased, and, after a silence of two months, the "Spectator" arose, and between the seventh and eighth volumes of the latter, the "Guardian" appeared. In the course of the next few years appeared the "Englishman," and the "Reader," in both of which Steele was concerned, though with but little profit or reputation. His pamphlet "The Crisis" raised an opposition which led to his being expelled the House of Commons.

In literary power Steele is inferior to his friend and fellow-writer Addison. His essays are nevertheless fresh and natural, full of "lively fancy, pleasing allegory, critical taste, playful satire." His sketches of character are felicitous in their variety and truthfulness. To the imagination of Steele we owe the original sketch of "Sir Roger de Coverly," which Addison afterwards made his own. Rattlebrain as he was, and given to extravagance and conviviality, Steele was the friend of virtue, and to his credit be it said that his writings, in conjunction with the works of others of his day, did much to raise the tone of the literature of the period,

and his plays "powerfully contributed to banish from the stage the ribaldry that, from the time of the Restoration, had made it the chief centre of immorality." The best known of these latter is the very successful comedy of "The Conscious Lovers," which brought to its author a large sum.

LAWRENCE ECHARD.

1671–1730.

A clergyman of the Church of England; published a

ROMAN HISTORY;
GENERAL ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY;
HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

These works, chiefly compilations from other writers, are of some merit and authority. They continued for a long time in very general use, and even now are useful as works of reference. The style is laborious, without displaying much elegance.

FIFTH PERIOD.

MODERN POPULAR INFLUENCE.

THE commencement of the eighteenth century saw the rise of what may be termed the period of popular influence.

The Review of Defoe—published at first once, then twice, then three times a week, at a price that placed it within the reach of all—was the first strong and successful appeal to the English people. The era of patronage was passing, if it had not passed, away; literature was to run alone, and authors were to stand upon their own merits. In the earlier periods, it was almost essential that authors should have a patron. Both literature and the taste for it was unformed. There was no reading public ready and anxious to get a glimpse of an author's work; no publishers ready to give an honourable remuneration for the brain expenditure of the book-maker. To venture, therefore, on writing a book, was a serious matter, requiring much consideration. Three things were necessary; first, repose, in order to prosecute study; secondly, the necessaries of life in some small degree; thirdly, the means of making the work known, and getting it read when written.

In the infancy of our literature, all this could only be done in one way—by obtaining a rich nobleman for patron, who could first afford to lend substantial aid; and either by monetary help, or taking the author into

his own service, or obtaining for him some sinecure office, secure for him the wants of daily life, and then, by his personal influence, obtain a circulation for the book when finished.

Judging from the fact that many of our best authors were thus sustained and encouraged, and knowing how difficult it is for unknown men to get help, and further remembering that true genius is always modest, it cannot but be doubted that there must have been many "mute inglorious Miltons," who were, with their talent and genius, lost to posterity, because of their inability to obtain notice and recognition. As literature grew older, these difficulties began to vanish; authors became independent of patronage, in proportion as they found general readers, till, at last, the patronage became little more than the permission to dedicate, with fulsome flattery and abject humility, the new book.

To obtain this permission, the poor author had "to wait in a great man's hall to pluck my Lord by the sleeve as he passed to his carriage, and beg a subscription for a forthcoming volume of poetry or prose. Success in such an undertaking depended much upon the number of half-crowns the poor author could afford to invest in buying the good-will of the porter or confidential footman of His Grace or Sir John. Not even the highest literary man was free from this humiliation of cringing before the great. No book appeared without a fulsome dedication or flattering apostrophe addressed to some person of quality, as the phrase then went, whose footman came smirking to the author's dingy room a few days after publication, with a present of five, or ten, or twenty guineas—the sum varying according to the amount of flattery laid on the belauded name, or, perhaps oftener, according to the run of luck which the gratified fashionable had happened to meet at the card-table of the night before."

While, in the earlier days, patronage fostered and perhaps preserved literature, it must also often have hap-

pened that it perverted the author from his honest way, and prevented him from saying all the true things that longed to burst the prison-house of his mind. While eating the bread, and receiving the kindness of a patron, it was but a natural thing that he should study his opinions. His taste was appealed to and considered: to preserve the gratuity, and with an eye to future help, the author had to belaud the patron to the skies, proclaim his virtues, and shield, if not defend, his vices. All this retarded the progress of literature. Its onward march, however, could not be stopped: underneath all, mind and heart were at work. The people began to yearn for mental food; their partizanship, as we have seen, was easily and successfully appealed to through books and pamphlets; and, as the taste for reading increased, so did the independence of the author, till, at last, he was able to shake off altogether the mental thraldom, and appear boldly before the world, appealing to the public for sympathy and reward.

This emancipation was the gradual work of the seventeenth century, and we can watch at the same time the growth, in proportion, of free thought and expression. The essayists with their penny sheets were an immense stride onward. Though they appealed chiefly to the aristocracy—as may be gathered from the fact of their circulation being so small—yet they proved the possibility of a penny sheet being able to exist and to find readers.

In such manner, therefore, as Steele and Addison appealed to the upper classes, whose tastes were alone considered, and the whims, fancies, and fooleries of whose lives were alone depicted, Defoe in his Review appealed to the people generally, with an equally successful result. It must be remembered that newspapers and reviews, with criticisms on men and passing events, were not a novelty in Defoe's time; for the impetus had been already given to the press, which has, by its own force and power, raised itself to the honour and dignity of a fourth estate. News sheets had been common

during the civil war, but the "Examiner," Defoe's Review, was the first that dared, in the name of the people, to criticise the doings of the court and government.

Defoe boldly threw off the yoke, and appealed to the patronage of the people. Sick, or well, in or out of prison, he carried on the work with a hearty reception and recompense. He fought the people's battle against the bigotry and tyranny of the authorities; and, though the latter, by the right of might, pilloried and imprisoned him, they neither silenced nor disgraced him. A sympathizing crowd gathered round with expressions of hope and encouragement for him, and execration on those who were

> "At a loss to find his guilt,
> And couldn't commit his crimes."

From that time the English public began to be the patrons of English literature. They were waiting and ready to be addressed, ripe for reading; and the change came—the literature was supplied.

It must not, however, be forgotten that the arts of manufacturing and producing copies of books had some effect in increasing and making the popular taste. This capability of production was the salvation of many authors. Had it not been for the printer and bookseller, the "Spectator," the "Tatler," the "Examiner," would not have reached the hands of their readers. Even with the facilities which were possessed at the commencement of the eighteenth century, the sale of books in general was small and slow. "The circle of book-readers was narrow; but still narrower was the circle of book-buyers. Indeed, many men never bought books at all; but, when any work came out of which they wished to get a sight, they went to the bookseller's shop day after day, and, for a small subscription, obtained leave to read at the counter. Marking their page where they left off in the afternoon, they came back again and again, until the volume was finished. This practice, which crowded the shops and stalls of

the booksellers, a hundred years ago, with a floating population of readers, laid the foundation of those useful circulating libraries and reading-clubs which so abound in modern days."

A few years later on, and this state of things began to change. The influence of free thought and expression, combined with free trade in authorship, and public patronage, was shown in the rise of such men as Robertson, who, from an unknown, obscure, and poverty-stricken condition, successfully appealed to and obtained a well-earned and merited reward from, not only the English people, but the readers of other countries also.

Then Richardson ventured upon a new path, which did and could only succeed by the support of many readers. Other writers also rose out of the darkness of obscurity, and lit the lamp of their genius at the light of the public eye. Appealing to its sympathies, they received its approbation.

So much, then, for the rise of popular influence, which has caused our literature to make such gigantic strides within the last fifty years. The public have been and are no mean patrons; but, at the same time, they are not always just judges. And this is shown the more as considerable approval is often given to whims and fancies, which now and then rise up and spread a flimsy, but attractive veil, behind which more robust thought is compelled to hide. The veil is, however, sooner or later pierced; its tinsel is sooner or later tarnished; and truth and right, which have never swerved from their path, go steadily on to maintain the reputation of our literature in ages to come.

The first fifty years of the seventeenth century may perhaps be said to have produced more men of letters and of science than any other period of the same extent. "Yet, while letters, and the cultivators of letters, were thus abundant, it must be allowed that, if we keep out of view the rise of the species of fiction called the *novel*, the age was not by any means marked

by such striking features of originality or vigour as some of the preceding eras. It was rather remarkable for polishing former styles, and improving the external figure of knowledge, than for creating much that was new."

The rise of the novel, which has since assumed so high a rank in literature, certainly introduced a new class of literature, which was founded upon the *heroic romances* which arose in France during the seventeenth century. The fictions of Defoe were a considerable advance upon some efforts made by previous writers, notably those of a lady named Aphra Behn, in the time of Charles II., who wrote tales of personal adventure, and of Mrs. Manley, author of "The New Atalantis." The works of both these writers were humorous and very licentious. Defoe's fictions, while they certainly contain far more interesting sketches of life and character, and the situations and plot display greater ingenuity, are, at the same time, undeniably more pure. It may, however, be fairly said of novels, before the time of Richardson, that they were mean in subject and indecorous in style, and calculated to degrade, while they could not in any respect improve, their readers.

DANIEL DEFOE.

1661–1731.

The son of a London butcher, he had but brief schooling, though what he had was well received, and made the best use of. After serving a hosier, tile-maker, and woollen merchant, he turned to literary work, and wrote some political pieces. For his opposition to the court and king he suffered imprisonment, fine, and pillory. Defoe had a hatred of bigotry and cant, and he is often found abusing all parties alike, Churchmen

and Dissenters. He fought not for any section, but for the English people. This obtained for him but little sympathy from any. He died deeply in debt.

POLITICAL PAMPHLETS.
ROBINSON CRUSOE.
HISTORY OF THE DEVIL.
HYMN TO THE PILLORY.
EXAMINER REVIEW.

These are the best known of Defoe's works. One of his pamphlets, entitled "The Good of Subjects is the End of Kings," was sold in the streets to the number of 8,000. Defoe's greatest works, because they are not ephemeral, are his works of fiction. In these he excels more than any other English writer in the power he displays of "painting fictitious events in the colours of truth." His style is simple, concise, and natural. In the "Examiner Review," which he started in 1704, we have the commencement of our present newspapers, and the predecessor of the present "Examiner" newspaper. It was brought out while he was in prison, and was sold for a penny, and published twice and three times a week. When Defoe died, he left behind him no less than 210 books and pamphlets.

JOHN ARBUTHNOT.

1667–1735.

Born in Kincardineshire, he became noted in London as physician to Queen Anne, as a wit, and as a writer of works of a humorous tone. His virtue and amiability were quite equal to his literary talent.

MARTINUS SCRIBLERUS.
HISTORY OF JOHN BULL.
ON THE SCOLDING OF THE ANCIENTS.
ART OF POLITICAL LYING.

The first is published in Pope's Works, and is a satire upon the abuses of human learning. The second, full of satire and ridicule directed against Marlborough,

is a burlesque on the war of the Spanish succession. The satire of this writer is free from the bitterness which characterized that of Swift; "a good-natured vein of pleasantry runs through all his compositions."

JOHN STRYPE.

1643-1737.

John Strype, a clergyman of the Church of England, and lecturer at Hackney, wrote many biographical and antiquarian works, such as—

LIVES OF CRANMER, CHEKE, WHITGIFT;
ANNALS OF THE REFORMATION;
ECCLESIASTICAL MEMORIALS.

JONATHAN SWIFT.

1667–1745.

Swift was born of English parents, in Hoey's Court, Dublin, in 1667. He was sent, at his uncle's expense, first to Kilkenny School, then to Trinity College, Dublin, and afterwards to Oxford, where he narrowly escaped being plucked. At the death of his uncle, he was thrown upon the world without any resources. He took refuge with, and was for some years the secretary and companion of, his relation Sir William Temple, with whom he resided at his seat at Moor Park until Sir William's death in 1698. In 1693 he became prebend of Kilroot, at £100 a year; returning, however, to Moor Park, he met King William, who offered to make him a captain of horse, which Swift refused. In 1713 he was presented with the deanery of St. Patrick's, an appointment which he owed to his support of the Tory party. During his residence in London, he kept a journal of passing events, which is preserved in his correspondence with the celebrated Hester Johnson, known in his writings as Stella. She was the daughter

of Sir William's housekeeper, and Swift is supposed to have privately married her. His political importance in England ceased on the accession of the new dynasty, and he devoted himself to his clerical duties—without, however, ceasing to concern himself with those measures that affected the interests of Ireland. Under the signature of "Drapier," he wrote a series of letters to a Dublin newspaper, opposing a monopoly of the copper coinage, which the government intended to grant by patent to a person of the name of Wolverhampton Wood. These letters kindled such a flame of resistance to the scheme that it was abandoned: no one would take the money, and, though attempts were made to bring him to trial, they all failed. His public spirit procured him unbounded popularity; and, to the end of his life, he was honoured by his countrymen as one of the greatest benefactors of Ireland. He had long been subject to fits of giddiness and deafness, from a cold caught while sitting in the garden at Moor Park. For some years before his death these fits increased in severity—so much so as to put a stop to all labour, though he continued to write till 1736—and this affection ultimately assumed the form of mental disease. In 1741 his mind had so far decayed, and he had become so sullen and ferocious, that he was placed under personal restraint; and in 1745 he died, after having lived for more than two years in a state of almost total silence.

PAMPHLETS ON VARIOUS POLITICAL SUBJECTS.
TALE OF A TUB. AN ALLEGORY.
M. B. DRAPIER'S LETTERS.
AN ARGUMENT AGAINST ABOLISHING CHRISTIANITY.
GULLIVER'S TRAVELS.

Swift's prose is powerful, and of the purest Anglo-Saxon; "he hated foreign words as he hated foreign men, and has given us such nervous bare unadorned genuine English as we get from no other pen." He shares this in common with Bunyan and Defoe, each of whom are masters in so difficult an art. As a prose

satirist Swift has never been equalled. "He was, without exception, the greatest and most efficient *libeller* that ever exercised the trade; and possessed, in an eminent degree, all the qualifications which it requires —a clear head, a cold heart, a vindictive temper, no admiration of noble qualities, no sympathy with suffering, not much conscience, not much consistency—a ready wit, a sarcastic humour, a thorough knowledge of the baser parts of human nature, and a complete familiarity with everything that is low, homely, and familiar in language. His works are chiefly of a political character. They are written with great plainness, force, and intrepidity, and always advance at once to the matter in dispute. Their distinguishing feature, however, is the force and vehemence of the invective in which they abound; the copiousness, the steadiness, the perseverance, and the dexterity, with which abuse and ridicule are showered upon the adversary."

"The Tale of a Tub" is an allegory written to combat and ridicule Hobbes's "Leviathan," and in support of the Church of England, ridiculing both Roman Catholics and Dissenters alike. Although Swift considered "The Tale of a Tub" his best work, modern criticism has awarded the palm to "Gulliver's Travels," to which work he certainly owes his widest reputation. It was written as a great political and personal satire, and published anonymously in 1726 with great success, being received and read by high and low.

The travels are among the dwarfs of Lilliput, the giants of Brobdignag, the philosophers of Laputa, and the magicians of Glubbdubdrich. The last voyage gives evidence of the ferocious spitefulness which was a characteristic of Swift's nature. It is filled with the most revolting pictures and impure satire.

LORD BOLINGBROKE.

1672–1751.

Henry St. John Vincent, Viscount Bolingbroke, was born at Battersea, and educated at Eton and Oxford. He became Secretary of State in the Tory Ministry of the reign of Anne; after George I. ascended the throne he was threatened with impeachment, and, in order to avoid it, he took refuge in France, where he joined the Pretender. He was pardoned in 1723, and returned to England, but was again compelled to flee the country for a short time. The rest of his life was spent in entire exclusion from all power.

REFLECTIONS ON EXILE.
LETTERS ON THE STUDY OF HISTORY.
LETTER ON THE TRUE USE OF RETIREMENT.
LETTERS ON THE SPIRIT OF PATRIOTISM.
IDEA OF A PATRIOT KING.

These works were written during his enforced retirement, the first three dating from France, the two latter from Battersea. His mortified ambition led him to publish them and others for the purpose of annoying the Ministry. Their matter is of little value, but their style is singularly eloquent and polished. It has been said to consist of a happy medium between that of the scholar and the man of society, and to have thus furnished a good model for popular writing.

BISHOP BERKELEY.

1684–1753.

George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne, was born at Kalevin, in the county of Kilkenny, Ireland, and educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he obtained a Fellowship. He afterwards went to London and Oxford, at which place he died. He was amiable in character,

and was possessed of a most winning address and extraordinary natural gifts.

THEORY OF VISION.
PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.
MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.

In the first he strives to prove that all sensible qualities—hardness, figure, extension—are mere ideas in our own minds, and have no existence at all in the things we call hard. Later on, in the "Principles of Human Knowledge," he extends the doctrine to immaterialism, and attempts to show "that we cannot prove that anything really exists, but that all objects which we suppose to be tangible make a mere impression on the mind by the immediate act of the Deity, according to certain laws, from which, in the ordinary course of nature, there is no deviation."

In the "Minute Philosopher" he brings all these ideas to bear, in a defence of the Christian religion. His works are still held in esteem; their style is scholarly and clear, and his language is simple.

HENRY FIELDING.

1707–1754.

Born at Sharpham Park, in Somersetshire, 1707, son of a lieutenant-general in the army, and a man of extravagant habits. Educated first at Eton, he went afterwards to pursue his studies at Leyden, but pecuniary difficulties prevented him from completing his course. This, and his own love of pleasure, caused him to hesitate in his choice of a profession, and he began to write for the stage. In 1735 he married Miss Craddock, whose little fortune of fifteen hundred pounds was soon dissipated. He then entered the Middle Temple, for the purpose of completing his long-suspended study of the law, and was called to the Bar in 1740. Few briefs came in his way, and he employed

his pen in writing political pamphlets. In 1749, through the interest of Lord Lyttelton, he was appointed one of the justices of the peace for Middlesex and Westminster. He died, of a complication of disease brought on by the dissipation of his early life, at Lisbon, and was buried in the British factory there.

PLAYS AND POLITICAL PAMPHLETS.
JOSEPH ANDREWS.
TOM JONES.
AMELIA.
JONATHAN WILD.

It was to the success of Richardson that we owe "Joseph Andrews," in which Fielding ridicules the, what was to him and many of his class, sentimentalism of "Pamela." The strength of the novel may be said to lie in the character of Parson Adams, whose "simplicity, benevolence, and purity of heart, are so admirably mingled with pedantry, absence of mind, and with the habits of athletic and gymnastic exercise, then acquired at the Universities by students of all descriptions, that he may be safely termed one of the richest productions of the muse of fiction." "Tom Jones" was written during the first year of his magistrate life, and contains scenes and characters which could be drawn only from the daily experiences of the police-bench. It is considered to be by far his best work, and is an account of the scenes and adventures in the life of a foundling. "Jonathan Wild" depicts the career of a thief, who turns thief-catcher, and ends his days upon the gallows; and "Amelia," that of a virtuous and domestic woman. While the latter has been justly censured for its immoral tendency, there is but one opinion as to the extraordinary skill and talent with which it is written, and the amusement which it affords. It may be regarded as a masterpiece in the department of humorous fiction.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON.

1689–1761.

Born in the county of Derby. Richardson was the son of a cabinet-maker, in humble circumstances of life. He received only a very inferior education, and was apprenticed to a printer at the age of fifteen, with whom he remained seven years, discharging very humble duties. His attention, however, to his business, the correctness of his morals, and his intelligence, obtained for him the favour of his master, who called him the "pillar of his house." He became his master's son-in-law, and was soon at the head of a considerable printing establishment in Fleet Street. He had done little, however, which showed that he was likely to make the press teem with his own productions. In 1754 he was elected Master of the Stationers' Company, and in 1760 he bought half a share in the patent of King's printer.

PAMELA.
CLARISSA HARLOWE.
SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

Till Richardson was fifty-three years old he had produced nothing better than prefaces, dedicatory epistles, &c., written for the booksellers during his obscurity.

The origin of "Pamela" was as follows:—He had agreed, being an expert in letter-writing, to compose a collection of specimen letters—a polite letter-writer, in fact—for two booksellers; and it occurred to him that the work would be greatly enlivened if the letters were connected by a thread of narrative. The booksellers applauded the notion, and he accordingly worked up the true story of a young servant-maid—the Pamela, an old romance name, of the novel—which had come to his knowledge a few years before.

The subject is virtue rewarded in the domestic history of a pretty peasant girl who goes out to service; and, after enduring many mishaps and escaping many dangers, becomes the wife of her rich young master.

So great was the popularity which attended its appearance that five editions were sold within the first year.

The work, notwithstanding its flattering reception, became the object of severe criticisms. Richardson endeavoured to reply to his censors by his "Pamela in High Life." Unfortunately this production, much inferior to the former, was far from attaining the end. "Clarissa Harlowe" appeared in 1748, "and Sir Charles Grandison" five years afterwards; each of which, like "Pamela," were founded upon the delineation of real character and the incidents of contemporary life.

The professed aim of Richardson as a novelist was to inculcate and promote piety and virtue; and, when we compare them with the works that had preceded them, "leaving out of sight those modern fictions which have since enriched our libraries, we shall be better able to appreciate the value of such productions, and we shall be less disposed to cavil at their faults, which stand clearly out in the light of modern refinement. Their naturalness and comparative purity of tone made them a precious boon to reading England in the day when they were written."

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE.

1690–1762.

Daughter of the Duke of Kingston, and wife of Mr. Edward Wortley Montague, whom she accompanied to Constantinople, where he was ambassador in 1717. She was a woman of masculine vigour of mind, and intimate with all the great writers of her day.

LETTERS,

written by her from Turkey and other places to her friends, are considered perfect models of epistolary composition. They are lively and descriptive, and those published constitute five large volumes. There

are many others unpublished which remain in the possession of her family.

LAWRENCE STERNE.

1713–1768.

Born of English parentage, at Clonmel, in 1713, his father being a lieutenant in the army. Having obtained several benefices in England, he resided for many years at his living of Sutton, in Yorkshire, where his amusements were "books, hunting, fiddling, and shooting."

TRISTRAM SHANDY.
SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY.

The first work of this eccentric author is a comic fiction in eight volumes, written with great humour and considerable power of language. It contains much that is absolute nonsense, and many expressions unbecoming in a clergyman. Its strokes of pathos and flights of fancy, have never been surpassed. It is like no other novel ever written: it has no interest of plot or of incident; "its merit and value lie partly in the humour with which the characters are drawn and contrasted, partly in that other kind of humour which displays itself in unexpected transitions, and curious trains of thought." Sir Walter Scott said that, in the characters of Uncle Toby, and Corporal Trim, the author "exalted and honoured humanity, and impressed upon his readers such a lively picture of kindness and benevolence, blended with courage, gallantry, and simplicity, that their hearts must be warmed whenever it is recalled to memory." The "Sentimental Journey," through France and Italy, is a series of observations on men and manners.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT.

1721–1771.

Born at Dalquhurn-house, near Renton, in Dumbartonshire, and educated at the Grammar-School of Dum-

barton, and the University of Glasgow. He began life as an apprentice to Mr. Gordon, an apothecary in Glasgow. His grandfather, Sir James Smollett of Bonhill, who had borne the expenses of his education, having died without leaving him any further provision, he went up to London, where, not meeting with the success he had anticipated, he entered the navy as a naval surgeon, and was present at the siege of Carthagena, but afterwards abandoned the medical profession for a literary career, and fixed his residence in London, where he took a prominent interest in literature and politics. He was imprisoned for three months and fined £100 for libel, while editing the "Critical Review." He died at Leghorn.

ADVICE: A SATIRE.
RODERICK RANDOM.
PEREGRINE PICKLE.
HUMPHREY CLINKER.
SIR LANCELOT GREAVES.
FERDINAND, COUNT FATHOM.
CONTINUATION OF HUME'S HISTORY.
&c., &c.

All the novels display the greatest ingenuity and humour. Their originality, truthfulness, and raciness have enabled them to survive the many changes of taste which have taken place since they were written. They depict scenes of sailor life, and are more popular at the present time than are the works of either Fielding or Richardson. Humphrey Clinker is undoubtedly the finest and most brilliant of them. "Like Fielding, Smollett is liable to censure for the impurity of many of his scenes, and much of his language, and for the baseness and wickedness of some of those characters for which he chiefly demands the affections of the reader; but, greatly as these peculiarities may tend to unfit his volumes for indiscriminate perusal, his works present a faithful picture of the manners of the time, which were deficient alike of taste and of morality."

LETTERS OF JUNIUS.

1769–1772.

These "Letters," which appeared in a London newspaper, aimed at exposing the aggressions of the Crown upon the liberties of the people; and, in performing the task, the highest personages of the realm became the objects, in turn, of the most unparalleled invective. These "Letters" stand alone in our language for condensed power of sarcasm and magnificence of declamation. "The author displayed such powers of keen yet delicate sarcasm, such dexterity in parrying and retorting the attacks of his adversaries, and so masterly a knowledge of the English constitution, as, joined to the brilliancy and polish of his style, gave to his compositions the character of a standard work, which they have ever since retained." The authorship may be considered unknown, though there is some slight evidence which fixes it upon Sir Philip Francis, who was a leading member of the Opposition.

EARL OF CHESTERFIELD.

1694–1773.

Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, known as a wit and the model of good society, was first a member of the House of Commons, and entered that of the Lords on the death of his father. He gained great distinction by his insinuating eloquence. He was afterwards Ambassador in Holland, Viceroy in Ireland, and Secretary of State. He was connected with the most distinguished men of England and of France, particularly with Voltaire and Montesquieu.

LETTERS TO HIS SON.

This, his only popular composition, contains many excellent advices for the cultivation of the mind and worldly conduct; but is deficient in the higher morality

which is the basis of all true nobility of character. The letters are elegant and polished in style.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

1728–1774.

Oliver Goldsmith, the son of a poor clergyman, was born at Pallas, in the county of Longford, Ireland, and educated as a Sizar at Trinity College, Dublin, where he barely obtained the degree of Bachelor of Arts. He made various attempts to be a tutor, a clergyman, a lawyer, a physician, studying for the purpose at Edinburgh and Leyden, which latter place he left with "one guinea in his pocket, but one shirt to his back, and a flute in his hand," to make the grand tour of Europe. He travelled through Holland, France, Germany, and Switzerland on foot, often without any subsistence, except such as might be brought by his flute. Returning into England in 1758, he began to write in the literary journals, and published under his own name some works which, not only created for him a great reputation, but were profitable in a pecuniary sense; nevertheless, his prodigality involved him in ceaseless difficulty.

Previously to settling down in earnest to get a livelihood by means of his pen, he endeavoured to get a footing in his own profession of medicine. In a little shop on Fish Street Hill, he acted as compounder and general drudge to an apothecary. He then commenced practice in Southwark, among the poor; there we see him dressed in a faded laced coat, laughing and talking with an old school-fellow whom he meets in the street; and then, a short time afterwards, in rusty-black velvet, with second-hand cane and wig, concealing a great patch in his coat by pressing his old hat fashionably against his side, while he resists the efforts of his poor patient to relieve him of the encumbrance.

The whole of Goldsmith's life was a conflict with creditors, the world, and society. Now dressed in sky-

blue and silver-laced coats, and promenading in Vauxhall, spending money freely with Grub Street improvidence; now wrapped in an old dressing-gown, hiding in a wretched London garret, glad of the smallest pecuniary assistance. He died of low fever, in London, with his debts and the memory of his reckless life casting heavy shadows on his dying bed.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE PRESENT STATE OF POLITE LEARNING IN EUROPE.
THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.
ENGLISH GRAMMAR.
HISTORY OF ENGLAND.
HISTORY OF THE EARTH AND ANIMATED NATURE.
HISTORIES OF GREECE AND ROME.
THE GOOD-NATURED MAN.
SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER.

The "Vicar of Wakefield" is his greatest prose work. "It is perhaps the very happiest, as it is certainly one of the least exceptionable, of the novels of the last century." It is the history of an amiable and simple-minded clergyman, during a series of domestic misfortunes, that severely try, but never subdue, his moral courage, and over which he is finally triumphant. With some defects in point of probability, it is a singularly beautiful and interesting picture of the middle-class of English rural society. An exquisite naturalness is its prevailing charm. No bad man could write a book so full of the soft sunshine and tender beauty of domestic life,—so sweetly wrought out of the gentle recollections of the old home at Lissoy. It was coloured with the hues of childhood's memory, and the Doctor Primrose of the story is a faithful portrait of his father.

The historical works were principally compilations, and are well known and used at the present time as school-books.

Of the plays still popular it may be said that both the "Good-Natured Man" and "She Stoops to Conquer" were clever attempts to bring back the theatrical public to the old way of thinking, which demanded "little more than nature and humour, in whatever walks of life

they were most conspicuous." Delineation of character was therefore his principal aim.

DAVID HUME.

1721–1776.

David Hume, a celebrated Scotch philosopher, and the descendant of an ancient Scottish family, was born in Edinburgh. He was brought up to the law, but never entered into business. When about twenty-four years old, he went to France to pursue his literary occupations in retirement and with economy. Subsequently honoured with several public appointments, he became secretary to General St. Clair, whom he accompanied to the courts of Vienna and Turin. In 1766 he was appointed Under-Secretary of State. Two years after he quitted public life and retired to Edinburgh, where he died.

TREATISE OF HUMAN NATURE.
INQUIRY CONCERNING THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS.
HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

The former of these works was afterwards published in two volumes of "Essays and Treatises, Moral, Political, and Literary." In these treatises Hume went yet farther than Bishop Berkeley, and propounded a theory of universal scepticism: he "denied *mind*, the substance in which successive sensations and reflections are supposed to inhere. That we do perceive, and do reflect, is, he admitted, certain; but what that is which perceives and reflects, whether it has any independent being of itself, apart from the series of impressions of which it is the subject, is a point altogether obscure, and on which, he maintained, our faculties have no means of determining. Philosophy was thus placed in a dilemma, and became impossible."

While holding the post of librarian to the Faculty of Advocates at Edinburgh, he commenced a "History of England." The first volume appeared in 1754–6, and

the whole work was completed in 1761. This work was the first in which the sequence of historical events is treated in a philosophical manner. It is without doubt the highest kind of historical writing that had yet appeared, and, though many subsequent writers have displayed learning, accuracy, and elegance, yet Hume's work has ever been a standard work. It excels in graceful narrative and dramatic description, and displays a deep vein of philosophical reflection, with a clear and profound insight into character.

"Its defects are carelessness as to facts and style, deliberate partiality towards the Cavalier party in the contests of the seventeenth century, to which may be added one of greater importance, for which, however, the author is not blameable—its want of the inestimable advantages which are now derivable from state documents and other genuine materials of history."

His avowed bias for despotism and the Stuarts does not, however, become of an extravagant character. The circumstance that Hume, being a Scotchman, could hardly be said to speak the language in which he wrote, adds somewhat to the interest of the book.

HENRY HOME.

1696–1782.

He assumed the title of Lord Kames on ascending the Scottish bench. He wrote several metaphysical and legal works, of which the chief and best known is—

THE ELEMENTS OF CRITICISM,

in which he "founds the art upon the principles of human nature."

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

1709–1784.

Samuel Johnson, son of a bookseller, was born at Lichfield, in Staffordshire, where he received the rudi-

ments of his education. He was sent to study at Pembroke College, Oxford, by some gentleman who, noticing his abilities, endeavoured to forward his studies; he had not, however, the means to finish them there, and was compelled to bring them to a close. On the death of his father, he became teacher at a school in Bosworth; but he soon left this situation, and went to live with a friend in Birmingham. He married a widow with a little property, and, having failed in an attempt to establish a school in his native town, set out for London, in search of literary employment, accompanied by the celebrated David Garrick, who was one of his pupils. Literary work proved less remunerative than he expected, and for years he struggled against poverty, neglect, and want of the bare necessaries of life; so much so, that he was frequently compelled to pass the day without a dinner. His anxieties were at length relieved, and his merits acknowledged, by George III., through the kindness of Lord Bute, who conferred on him a pension of £300 a year. He died at Bolt Court, Fleet Street, London. "Johnson laboured under constitutional infirmities of body and mind, which rendered him occasionally gloomy, capricious, and overbearing; though he seems to have been by no means deficient in either abstract or practical benevolence."

PAPERS IN THE "GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE."
PAPERS IN THE "IDLER," "RAMBLER," AND "ADVENTURER."
RASSELAS.
TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES.
LIVES OF THE POETS.
ENGLISH DICTIONARY.

The works of Johnson are becoming less familiar than they were to modern readers. The best productions of his pen are the "Lives of the Poets," written as prefaces to a collection of their respective works. While these Lives are masterpieces of English, they must not be taken as reliable, so far as biography or criticism is concerned.

"Rasselas" is a tale in which the hero spends some

time in searching for happiness. The moral of the work is, that the darkest periods of the present life, which puzzle and confound and seem so antagonistic to the doctrine of a kind, overruling Providence, are lighted up with a compensating faith in a future immortality. The compilation of the Dictionary occupied the years from 1747 to 1755. The price stipulated for was £1,575. While it is now considered somewhat defective in etymology and limited in the selection of words, it is yet a work of great value for the rich store of quotations it contains, many of which are beautiful and well chosen.

"Johnson's style is cumbrous, antithetical, and pompous, yet possesses, generally, great dignity and strength, sometimes even rising to remarkable beauty and nobleness. It was so influential upon the men of his day that it caused a complete revolution, for a time, in English style, and by no means for the better; since inferior men, though they could easily appropriate its peculiarities or defects—its long words, its balanced clauses, its laboured antitheses—could not with equal ease emulate its excellences."

SOAME JENKYNS,

1704–1787,

A witty and speculative writer, produced—

A FREE INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE OF EVIL.
A VIEW OF THE INTERNAL EVIDENCES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.
DISQUISITIONS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

These ingenious works were exceedingly popular in their day; but the interest which then attached to them has gradually faded away.

DR. ADAM SMITH.

1723–1790.

Born at Kirkaldy, in Fifeshire, Scotland. He studied at Glasgow, and afterwards at Oxford, and in 1748

went to Edinburgh, where he lectured on rhetoric and literature. In 1752 he was made Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow. He afterwards accompanied the Duke of Buccleugh on his travels on the Continent, and in Paris became intimate with the economists Turgot and Quesnay, with D'Alembert, Necker, Marmontel, &c. He returned to Scotland in 1766, and retired to Kirkaldy. Two years afterwards he was appointed Commissioner of the Customs in Scotland, a lucrative place, which he retained until his death.

THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS.
INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF THE WEALTH OF NATIONS.

The first is a metaphysical work, in which he explains all human morality by sympathy, or "that sentiment which causes us to place ourselves in the position of our fellow-creatures, and think and judge as they do."

In his "Wealth of Nations," if he did not invent the science of political economy, he enlarged and systematized it. He considers labour as the foundation of wealth, and recommends the division of labour, as well as entire freedom of commerce and industry. "He also showed, in opposition to the commonly-received opinions of the merchants, politicians, and statesmen of his time, that wealth does not consist in the abundance of gold and silver, but in the abundance of the various necessaries, conveniences, and enjoyments of human life; that it is in every case sound policy to leave individuals to pursue their own interests in their own way; that, in prosecuting branches of industry advantageous to themselves, they necessarily prosecute such as are, at the same time, advantageous to the public; and that every regulation intended to force industry into particular channels, or to determine the species of commercial intercourse to be carried on between different parts of the same country, or between distant and independent countries, is impolitic and pernicious."

WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

1721–1793.

Dr. William Robertson, son of a Presbyterian minister, was born at Borthwick, near Edinburgh. In his early youth he showed a strong love of study. Leaving the University of Edinburgh, he embraced the profession of his father, and at the age of twenty-two was presented to the living of Gladsmuir, in Haddingtonshire, and afterwards became minister of Lady Lester's Church, Edinburgh. The head of a numerous family, of which at the death of his father he was the only support, Dr. Robertson remained for some time in humble circumstances; but, becoming distinguished by his writings, he was appointed Principal of the University of Edinburgh, and soon received a striking mark of royal approval, in his appointment as historiographer for Scotland. He died in the enjoyment of the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and the admiration of the educated of all lands.

HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.
HISTORY OF THE REIGN OF CHARLES V.
HISTORY OF AMERICA.

The first of these works obtained for the then unknown minister a most brilliant reputation. Encouraged by its reception, he at once commenced what is by far the finest work of the three—"The History of Charles the Fifth of Germany." It took him ten years to complete what, from the very nature of the materials, was a most difficult work. It was, however, a perfect success, and materially increased his fame. The "History of America" is the lightest, and perhaps the most entertaining, of all his works. His merits as a writer are thus described by one of his biographers: "His style is pure, sweet, dignified without stiffness, singularly perspicuous, and often eloquent; the arrangement of his materials is skilful and luminous, his mode of narrative distinct, and his descriptions highly graphical; and he

displays a sagacity in the development of causes and effects, and in his judgment of public characters and transactions, which is very remarkable in one who was brought up in obscurity and retirement. If there is less glow and ardour in his expression of moral and political feelings, than some eminent writers in a free country have manifested, there is, on the other hand, all the candour and impartiality which belong to a cool temper, when enlightened by knowledge and directed by principle."

EDWARD GIBBON.

1737–1794.

Born at Putney, in Surrey, of an ancient family, and educated at Westminster School and Magdalen College, Oxford. After reading Bossuet's "Variations," he turned Roman Catholic; but, being sent by his father to reside with a Calvinist minister at Lausanne, he returned to the Protestant faith. During his stay he became a perfect master of French and Latin. In 1770 he entered Parliament, where he sat for eight years without taking any prominent part in political affairs. He was also for some time Captain in the Hampshire Militia. After living in Switzerland, he died in London of a long-standing disease.

STUDY OF LITERATURE.
HISTORY OF THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.
MISCELLANEOUS WORKS.

The first volume of the "Decline and Fall" was published in the year 1776, when he had been six years in Parliament, and the last in 1788. The circumstance that led to the writing of the books is thus told by himself:—

"As I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, the idea of writing the Decline and Fall of the city first started to my mind."

As a literary performance, it must be regarded as the noblest historical work in the English language. Its characteristics are vast and solid erudition, criticism exact and ingenious, and an almost constantly sustained interest in the narrative. It abounds in splendid passages and curious discussions; and is written in a style, which, though affectedly sonorous and occasionally obscure, is such as to display a thorough mastery of the English language. It is full, however, of defects and flaws. It repudiates Christianity, and underrates the sufferings and faithfulness of the early Christian Martyrs.

"When a Christian bishop or doctor, or a religious king, comes before his field of vision, it is not in Gibbon to be just; he cannot or will not believe that such a man was anything more than a compound of enthusiasm and superstition, in whom morality was always ready to give way to ecclesiastical considerations; and his sneering cavils seem to leave their trail upon the purest virtue, the most exalted heroism, which the times that he writes of produced for the instruction of mankind."

The chapters on the spread of Christianity have little of the fire with which he describes the blood-stained marches of Mahomet. He also somewhat delights to dwell on licentious and disgusting details.

HORACE WALPOLE.

1718–1797.

Third son of Robert Walpole, first Earl of Orford, to which title he succeeded towards the close of his life, as third earl. He held some valuable sinecure offices, and was possessed of an income of £4,000 a year. Though a member of the House of Commons for twenty-six years, he took but very little part in its business. He spent the greater part of his time at his villa, at Twickenham, named Strawberry Hill, which he had built and furnished in strict Gothic taste. There he followed his favourite

pursuits of literature, and set up a printing-press of his own.

ÆDES WALPOLIANA: AN ACCOUNT OF HIS FATHER'S HOUSE.
HISTORIC DOUBTS ON THE REIGN OF RICHARD III.
CATALOGUE OF ROYAL AND NOBLE AUTHORS.
ANECDOTES OF PAINTING IN ENGLAND.
THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO: A GOTHIC ROMANCE.
HISTORY OF THE LAST TEN YEARS OF GEORGE THE SECOND
LETTERS.

All but the two last were published during his lifetime. These two, however, are the most valuable, the "Letters" especially so, being full of the most lively and sparkling descriptions of the character, manners, and customs of his own times.

Walpole, "though a polished and keen, is by no means a genial, writer; selfish himself, he did not much believe in human disinterestedness, and was destitute of those strong human sympathies and antipathies which impart a certain interest to the works of much inferior men."

EDMUND BURKE.

1730–1797.

Born in Dublin, where his father practised as an attorney, and enjoyed large and thriving practice. Educated first at Balletore School, Kildare, and then under a Quaker tutor, named Abraham Sharkelton, he entered Trinity College, Dublin, in 1743, and commenced at the Middle Temple four years afterwards. In 1761 he appeared on the arena of political life, as private secretary to Hamilton, then Secretary of State for Ireland, and had a pension of £300 settled upon him. This, however, he threw up and returned to London. Appointed secretary to the Duke of Buckingham, he entered Parliament in the following year as member for Wendover. Among the foremost men of St. Stephen's Burke soon took an honoured place. For eight-and-twenty years the walls of the ancient hall rung with the "rolling periods of his grand eloquence." As an

orator, Burke was matchless. Through the American war, which he opposed, he made many noble orations on behalf of the colonists, but his crowning glory is the speech on the impeachment of Warren Hastings. Opening the case in February, 1788, in a speech of four days, he continued his statement during certain days of April, and wound up his charges with an address which began on the 28th of May, and lasted for the nine succeeding days. "As he spoke, the scenery of the East—rice-field and jungle, gilded temple and broad-bosomed river, with a sky of heated copper glowing over all—unfolded itself in a brilliant picture before the kindled fancy of his audience; and when the sufferings of the tortured Hindoos, and the desolation of their wasted fields, were painted as only Burke could paint in words, the effect of the sudden contrast upon those who heard him was like the shock of a Leyden jar. Ladies sobbed and screamed, handkerchiefs and smelling-bottles were in constant use, and some were even carried out in fits."

On the death of his son Richard, he retired to his estate at Beaconsfield, where he died.

VINDICATION OF NATURAL SOCIETY.
ESSAY ON THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.
SKETCH OF AMERICAN HISTORY.
REFLECTIONS ON THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE.
LETTER TO A NOBLE LORD.
LETTERS ON A REGICIDE PEACE.
OBSERVATIONS ON THE CONDUCT OF THE MINORITY.

Of these works the "Reflections on the Revolution in France," is the best and most powerfully written, and next to it, as a specimen of his peculiar style, stands the "Letter to a Noble Lord." In the former, he raises a protest and warning to England not to cherish the feelings that were doing such harm, and "bearing so terrible a harvest across the waves of the channel." In it is contained the famous passage on Marie Antoinette, and the "ages of chivalry." It had an immense success, and was replied to by Thomas Paine. Besides

the above works, Burke for some time conducted the "Annual Register."

WILLIAM PALEY.

1743–1805.

Born at Peterborough, where his father was a clergyman. Educated at Christ Church, Cambridge, where he took the degree M.A., was elected a Fellow, and appointed one of the College Tutors in 1776. In 1776 he married, and quitted the University, after living there for ten years. He retired to the vicarage of Dalston, in Cumberland. Soon afterwards he was presented to the living of Appleby, and with a Prebend's stall in Carlisle Cathedral. In 1782, he was made Archdeacon of the diocese, and soon after Chancellor, all of which preferments he owed to the friendship of the Bishop of Carlisle. He soon afterwards received the valuable living of Bishops Wearmouth, was made a Sub-dean of Lincoln, and a Prebend of St. Pancras. In 1795, the University of Cambridge created him D.D.

THE PRINCIPLES OF MORAL AND POLITICAL ECONOMY.
HORÆ PAULINÆ.
EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.
NATURAL THEOLOGY.

The first work is one of great value, "though its conclusions on the foundation of moral distinctions, on subscriptions to articles of religion, on the British constitution, and several other topics, have been frequently assailed by equally able writers."

The "Horæ Paulinæ," is a valuable exposition of the evidence of the truth of the gospels to be found in the writings of the Apostle Paul.

The "Natural Theology," is an ingenious argument in favour of the Deity, deduced from His works. "The writings of Paley, all of which refer to the highest and most important questions upon which human reason can be exercised, are less remarkable for eloquence than for

minute and elaborate reasoning, an easy and familiar style of illustration, and a vigilant and comprehensive sagacity, which pursues an argument through all its details, and never fails to bring it clearly out at last."

CHARLES JAMES FOX,

1748–1806,

Was the son of the first Lord Holland, the rival and opponent of Pitt, and was educated by his father till old enough to proceed to Oxford. His University career was somewhat dissipated. He took his seat in Parliament for Midhurst, when but twenty years of age. In 1770, he was appointed a Lord of the Admiralty, and afterwards a Commissioner of the Treasury. In 1780, he was elected member for Westminster, and took office as Secretary for Foreign Affairs. On the appointment of the Earl of Shelbourne as Prime Minister, Fox resigned. As a private individual, his character was of the most amiable kind, and he was greatly beloved for his kindly disposition and impartiality. Fox was a powerful orator, and strictly logical speaker; but, in eloquence and brilliancy, he stands second to Pitt, Burke, and Sheridan.

HISTORY OF THE EARLY PART OF THE REIGN OF JAMES II.

This work, with an introductory chapter, is but a fragment of a more elaborate work which Fox contemplated writing respecting the transactions which "preceded and attended and followed" the Revolution of 1688. This small portion displays a simple and unpretending style, without any effort at profound thinking, or very elegant writing.

RICHARD PORSON.

1759–1808.

Born at East Ruston, in Norfolk, the son of the parish clerk, and educated at Eton and Cambridge,

where he obtained great renown, and became Professor of Greek. He afterwards filled the office of librarian to the London Institution. At college he was noted for his drinking habits. He was possessed of a large fund of humour and an astonishing memory.

CRITICAL NOTES TO VARIOUS GREEK POETS.
ADVERSARIA.
TRACTS AND MISCELLANIES.

The two latter were published after his death. His works display the most careful critical judgment and profound learning.

RICHARD WATSON,

1737–1816,

Bishop of Llandaff, and one of the great divines that adorned the latter half of the eighteenth century. He wrote some works noted for their liberal views of both Church and State.

AN APOLOGY FOR CHRISTIANITY.
AN APOLOGY FOR THE BIBLE.
SERMONS, &c.

The first was written in defence of religion, from the sneers and scoffs contained in Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." The latter is a refutation of the atheistic doctrines of Thomas Paine.

THOMAS BROWN.

1778–1820.

Born in Galloway, and educated for the profession of medicine. For some time he practised as a physician; but, finding the study of ethics more congenial to his taste, he gave up medicine and accepted the Professor-

ship of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh, vacant by the resignation of Dugald Stewart.

LECTURES ON MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

These, his chief productions, are clearly written, with force and even elegance.

DAVID RICARDO.

1772–1823.

Born in London, the son of a Dutch Jew, he became a thriving and busy stock-broker. He entered Parliament, and saw several sessions of parliamentary life. He devoted himself entirely to questions of political economy.

THE HIGH PRICE OF BULLION;
THE PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY AND TAXATION,

are his best and chief writings, the latter ranking next to Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" in its importance and argument.

JOHN PINKERTON.

1758–1826.

Born at Edinburgh. He was intended for the Bar; but in 1780 forsook the study of the law for literature.

MODERN GEOGRAPHY ON A NEW PLAN.
HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.
GENERAL COLLECTION OF VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

Pinkerton is possessed of all the prejudices, untiring devotion, and enthusiasm that distinguishes the historical antiquary. His writings, while they throw light upon some of the obscurer portions of Scottish history, are marred by an attempt at fine writing, which is not only a failure, but out of place.

DUGALD STEWART.

1753–1828.

Born in Edinburgh, he attained, in 1780—when only twenty-seven years old—to the Professorship of Moral Philosophy in that University where he had received his education.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN MIND.
THE PROGRESS OF METAPHYSICAL AND ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY.
OUTLINES OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

Perhaps the greatest exponent of what has been termed the "Scotch or common-sense school" of metaphysical writings.

Though, by his own confession, they leave a true and complete philosophy still in expectation, they have been "received with the highest marks of public approbation, on account of the singular elegance of their composition, and the cheerful, benevolent, and elevating views of human nature, and the progress of man as a social being, which they present."

WILLIAM HAZLITT.

1778–1830.

Born at Maidstone; went at the age of nine to a day-school at Wem, in Shropshire, where his father, a Presbyterian minister, then resided; in 1793 entered as a student of the Unitarian College at Hackney, but, disliking the ministry, turned artist, and visited Paris to study the pictures in the Louvre; for some time acted as a reporter to the *Morning Chronicle;* and, in the latter part of his life, contributed to the "Edinburgh Review." His life was a scene of continued literary labour, but his improvidence kept him in poverty. He died in London of cholera.

PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN ACTION.
CHARACTERS OF SHAKSPEARE'S PLAYS.
TABLE TALK.
LECTURES UPON THE ENGLISH POETS.
LIFE OF NAPOLEON.

Besides the above, Hazlitt contributed a large number of articles, essays, reviews, and critiques to various periodical works.

The "Lectures on English Poetry" manifest great extravagance in their opinions and criticism; they are, however, written in the most brilliant style, and display thought and research. To them may be traced, in a great degree, the taste of the present day for the early writers of our English Literature.

His last work is considered to be the best, as it was his most elaborate work. As a critic Hazlitt was brilliant and refined, and all his works display terseness and vivacity of style, with strength of character, and knowledge of human nature.

HENRY MACKENZIE.

1745–1831.

Born and educated in Edinburgh. He was a lawyer by profession, for some time the Comptroller of Taxes for Scotland.

THE MAN OF FEELING.
THE MAN OF THE WORLD.

These two novels, of which the latter is much the inferior, are modelled upon Sterne, though the disciple is better than the master, possessing more pathos and true feeling than Sterne. The first one represents a man who is too tender-hearted to do battle in this rough world; the second aims at exhibiting a person who, rushing headlong into guilt and ruin, spreads misery all around him, by the pursuit of selfish and sensual pleasures.

WILLIAM ROSCOE,

1753–1831,

Was an attorney and banker of Liverpool, his native town; he afterwards represented it in Parliament for some time. The failure of the bank in which he was partner plunged him in difficulties. In 1796 he published, in two volumes,—

LIFE OF LORENZO DE MEDICI;
THE LIFE AND PONTIFICATE OF LEO X.

The latter, published nine years after the former, is by far the better work of the two, but was, nevertheless, received with less favour than was its predecessor. The chief fault of the work lies in the exceeding minuteness with which all events, whether of importance or not, are described.

JEREMY BENTHAM.

1748–1832.

Born in London, the son of a solicitor, he was brought up with a view of becoming a barrister; but, revolting at the abuse of right which, in the course of his studies, he saw took place daily, he turned to literature instead.

FRAGMENT OF GOVERNMENT.
A DEFENCE OF USURY.
THEORY OF PUNISHMENTS AND REWARDS.
BOOK OF POLITICAL FALLACIES.
A CONSTITUTIONAL CODE.

From the very first he inculcates and pushes almost to an extreme the doctrine that the chief aim of government ought to be the "greatest good of the greatest number," and that in legislation and in morality no other rule but utility is to be allowed. Hence the phrase "Utilitarian," which has been applied to his peculiar writings and tenets. Although a profound thinker, Mr. Bentham did not possess the art of writing in an easily intelligible manner: "he bewilders

his readers by minute methodical subdivisions, and newly-compounded words, designed to convey ideas with more than usual clearness."

SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

1765–1832.

Born at Aldourie House, on the banks of Loch Ness. He was called to the Bar in 1795, and, after winning considerable renown by his legal attainments, he was appointed Recorder of Bombay, which position he held for seven years, when he retired on a pension of £1,200.

Though he had but little time to devote to authorship, he produced some works which will remain for ever as a specimen of what he might have done.

DISSERTATION ON ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY (Encyclopædia Britannica).
SKETCH OF HISTORY OF ENGLAND (Lardner's Encyclopædia).

His "Sketch of English History" is less a detailed narrative of events, than a rapid, yet clear, profound, and philosophic view of the state and progress of society, law, government, and civilization; in which the lessons of experience, the character of men and events, the circumstances which have promoted, retarded, and modified the social and political improvement of the English nation, are unfolded and judged with the acuteness of a philosopher, and the wisdom of a practical statesman. His style, though sometimes clumsy and inelegant, often rises to eloquence when he records the growth of liberty, or the influence of generous institutions.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

1771–1832.

Sir Walter Scott was born at Edinburgh, where his father followed the profession of a lawyer, being a writer to the Signet. He belonged through his father to the ancient clan or border family of Scott, of which

the chieftain was the Duke of Buccleugh. Educated first at the High School, and afterwards at the University of his native town, he commenced at the age of nineteen to study for the law, having chosen to be called to the Bar in preference to following his father's profession. In 1792 he began to practise as an advocate, with fair prospects of professional success. But nature was too strong for him: literature engrossed more of his time and thoughts. In 1797 he had married Charlotte Carpenter, and settled at Lasswade, on the Esk. Foreseeing that he would not succeed at the Bar, he obtained, in 1799, the appointment of Sheriff of Selkirkshire, to which, in 1806, was added a clerkship in the Court of Session, with a salary of £1,300 a year. Both these appointments, which involved magisterial and official duties of a rather burdensome nature—always most punctually and conscientiously discharged—Scott held till within a year before his death.

In 1804 Scott removed to Ashestiel, a house overlooking the Tweed, near Selkirk, for the more convenient discharge of his magisterial duties. In 1812 he removed to Abbotsford, where he had been enabled, by the success of his literary labour, to erect a charming, incongruous, half-castle sort of residence, which has been called "a Gothic romance embedded in stone and mortar." About 1805, Scott had become a partner in the printing firm of Ballantyne & Co., and later on he joined the bookselling business of his old friend Arthur Constable. In 1826 occurred the money panic, which caused the failure of both these houses, and not only swept away the whole of Scott's fortune, but burdened him with a debt of £117,000. Nobly refusing to permit his creditors—or rather the creditors of the firm to which he belonged—to suffer any loss that he could help, he devoted his life and his pen to the herculean task of removing this mountain-debt. One of the richest bankers of England sent Sir Walter a blank cheque, signed; but the author thanked him for

his generous intention, and engaged, in time, to pay all that he owed, with interest. With this object in view, he laboured with his pen yet harder than he had ever done, and every day saw the completion of what was equal to thirty pages of print. Such toil as this, coupled with the death of his beloved wife, soon told upon both mind and body. In 1830 he was struck with paralysis, from the effects of which he never recovered. Fits of apoplexy and paralysis occurred at intervals during that and the following year; and, as a last hope, he sailed, in the autumn of 1831, for Malta and Italy. He lived at Naples and at Rome for about six months; and, had he entirely ceased his labours, the sad end, of which the beginning had already come, might have been deferred. He would work, and the consequence was that he derived little benefit from the trip. On his way home down the Rhine, the mortal blow was struck, and, though he was enabled to return to Abbotsford, he died shortly afterwards, on the afternoon of a calm. September day, in the midst of his loving family and sorrowing friends. In person Sir Walter Scott was slightly deformed; in character he was all that was generous, upright, and noble. His mode of life was exceedingly pure and simple. In 1812 the Prince Regent offered him the Poet-Laureateship, which he refused. He was created a baronet as a mark of honour for his eminent abilities.

THE WAVERLEY NOVELS.
LIFE OF NAPOLEON.
LIFE OF DRYDEN.
LIFE OF SWIFT.
LIVES OF THE BRITISH NOVELISTS.
PAPERS IN THE REVIEWS.
DEMONOLOGY AND WITCHCRAFT.

The greater number of the "Waverley Novels," as the entire collection of novels of Scott is termed, were published anonymously. The first one excited the greatest curiosity. It gave evidence of all that extensive knowledge of the manners, customs, and

legends of Scotland, which was still further displayed in his later works.

The tales are twenty-nine in number, and are remarkable for the beauty of the descriptions, the truth of the characters, the naturalness and vivacity of the dialogues, and the delicate manner in which they delineate the passion of love, so shamefully abused by many novelists.

"The graphic force with which he brought both historical and imaginary beings before the mind of the reader; the singular interest which he gave to the proceedings and relations of these persons; the humour, the pathos, the fine spirit of benevolence which pervaded every page, had, long ere the last of these works was published, raised their unknown author to a reputation not only exceeding that of Fielding, Smollett, and all the great masters of prose fiction, but equalling the reverence which ages had accumulated for the first names in English literature."

It was not till 1827 that the authorship of them was avowed, although it had been guessed some time before. The success and favour with which they were received is shown in the fact that "Woodstock," the first novel after his misfortunes, sold for £8,228.

The "Life of Napoleon," although it was sold, it is said, for £12,000, is inferior as a literary production. It is, however, received with greater favour now than formerly. It is in nine bulky volumes, and modelled on Southey's "Life of Nelson."

The "Lives of the Novelists," written first as prefaces to an edition of their works, and afterwards published separately, are pieces of animated writing, and superior to the "Life of Napoleon."

"Scott was eminently a painter in words. The picturesque was his forte. Witness the magnificent descriptions of natural scenery—sunsets, stormy sea, deep woodland glades—with which many of his chapters open. But his portraitures surpass his landscapes. For variety and true painting of character he was undoubt-

edly the Shakspeare of our English prose. What a crowd of names, 'familiar as household words,' come rushing on the mind, as we think of the gallery of portraits his magical pencil has left for our endless delight and study!"

WILLIAM COBBETT.

1762–1835.

Born at Farnham, in Surrey, where he spent his early years as a farm-labourer. He afterwards left the plough, and entered the army as a common soldier. He went with his regiment to the United States, where he remained till 1791, when he received his discharge as sergeant. After residing some little time in Paris, he returned to Philadelphia, and set up as a bookseller. Having been punished by the government of the United States for some severe strictures on the French influence then predominant, he left America, and returned to England, where he again got into trouble with his writings, and was fined £1,000 and imprisoned. Thus involved in political and pecuniary embarrassment, he again went to the United States, and took up his abode in some quiet spot to escape his creditors. After a twelvemonth's voluntary exile he returned once more to England, and took a prominent and effective part in public efforts for the promotion of civil liberty. He also occupied himself greatly with agriculture, and specially endeavoured to promote the cultivation of maize. On the passing of the Reform Act he was returned as member of Parliament for Oldham. He failed, however, as a public speaker, and his influence in the House was very small.

RURAL RIDES.
COTTAGE ECONOMY.
HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION.
WORKS ON AMERICA.
ARTICLES IN THE "PORCUPINE," AND "POLITICAL REGISTER."
TREATISE ON COBBETT'S CORN.
ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

These are his chief literary works. The works of "Peter Porcupine," first published in Philadelphia, drew down upon him the wrath of the United States government, and his essays in the "Political Register," published in London, led to his punishment here. The latter was published weekly, and is a valuable appendage to the history of the times. It contains much good and effective writing, and its style is remarkably pure and clear. The treatise was written in order to forward the cultivation of maize in England, and its title-page was of paper made from the stalks of his favourite plant.

All his works have an especial value, as illustrating "a fine type of the English peasant mind."

MADAME D'ARBLAY (Frances Burney),

1752–1840,

The second daughter of Dr. Burney, organist of Chelsea College, was born at Lynn, in Norfolk. While on a visit to Queen Charlotte, at Windsor, she was appointed second keeper of the robes, with a salary, servants, and apartments. She held the office for five years, when she resigned, in consequence of ill-health; and shortly afterwards, in 1793, married Count D'Arblay, a French refugee officer. In 1802, she accompanied her husband to France, where they remained for some considerable period. In 1812 she returned to England, and died at Bath, at the advanced age of eighty-eight years.

EVELINA.
CECILIA.
CAMILLA.
THE WANDERER.
MEMOIRS OF HER FATHER.

The first of these works is said to have been written when she was but fifteen years old, though it was not published till she was twenty-five. It relates the experience and sensations of a young lady on her entrance

into the world, in the fashionable sense of the term. It was published anonymously, but became so popular that her name was disclosed by her father to Johnson, with whom she became a great favourite.

"Cecilia" is a more finished production; but is neither so amusing, nor so full of situations and good points as the first production of her pen.

Both "Camilla" and "The Wanderer" are tedious and dull tales, each in five volumes.

JOHN FOSTER.

1770–1843.

The son of a farmer, and born near Halifax in Yorkshire: at an early age he attracted the notice of the late Dr. Fawcett, Baptist minister, of Hebden Bridge, near Halifax, in Yorkshire, by whose influence he was entered a student of the Baptist College, Bristol. He afterwards became a minister of that sect at Downend, near Bristol. In the quiet of his study he produced some of the most remarkable productions of the age. He relinquished the duties of a minister, and devoted himself to literature.

ARTICLES IN THE "ECLECTIC REVIEW."
ESSAYS IN A SERIES OF LETTERS TO A FRIEND.
EVILS OF POPULAR IGNORANCE.

The essays are:—On a Man's Writing Memoirs of Himself; On Decision of Character; On the Epithet Romantic; On Evangelical Religion rendered less acceptable to Persons of Taste. They are written in a plain strong style, and their reasoning is most profound. The keen insight which they display into the workings of the human heart and understanding, will always place them among the foremost in the list of ethical works. The "Evils of Popular Ignorance," is rather a heavy work. Foster's intellect was of the highest order; his mind was well furnished, well cultivated, logical, and powerful; and his style possesses both elegance and strength.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

1774–1843.

Born at Bristol, the son of a linendraper, and educated at Westminster School and Balliol College, Oxford, which he left in rather an abrupt manner, in 1794. He then studied law at Gray's Inn, and made a couple of visits to Lisbon, where his uncle was chaplain of the British factory. The last forty years of his life were spent at Greta Hall, near Keswick, Cumberland. Latterly he was without reason, in consequence of a stroke of paralysis. Though a poet of striking worth, Southey was a remarkable writer of English prose. Like Johnson, he lived from "hand to mouth," until a pension placed him above the fear of want; but he could not then give up the habits of incessant study and literary toil, which had grown to be his second nature. He was never so happy as when he sat amid his books, pen in hand, adding newly-written sheets to the pile of manuscript already lying in his copy-drawer.

LIFE OF NELSON.
HISTORY OF BRAZIL.
LIVES OF WESLEY, CHATTERTON, KIRKE WHITE, AND COWPER.
HISTORY OF THE PENINSULAR WAR.
COLLOQUIES IN SOCIETY.
THE DOCTOR.

All these works are models of clear, polished, unstrained and elegant writing: "a language flowed from his practised pen which few English writers have surpassed."

SYDNEY SMITH.

1768–1845.

Born at Woodford, in Essex; educated first at Winchester School, and afterwards at New College, Oxford, where he was elected a Fellow in 1790. His first

appointment as a clergyman was the curacy of Nether Avon, on Salisbury Plain. He afterwards became tutor to the son of Mr. Beach, M.P. for Cirencester, and resided with his pupil for five years at Edinburgh. In 1803 he removed to London, where he principally resided until his death, and became a popular preacher, and lecturer on polite literature. He was intimate with all the most eminent men of the day, with Brougham, Jeffrey, and others of Whig principles, and was distinguished for his wit and conversational powers. He afterwards held the livings of Foston, in Yorkshire, and Combe-Florey, in Somersetshire; and was one of the canons-residentiary of St. Paul's.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE "EDINBURGH REVIEW."
LETTERS ON THE SUBJECT OF THE CATHOLICS TO MY BROTHER ABRAHAM, BY PETER PLYMLEY.
LECTURES ON MORAL PHILOSOPHY.
TRACTS.

These, with sermons and occasional letters on various subjects, are the works which came from his pen. The first number of the "Edinburgh Review" was edited by Smith, who, in conjunction with his friends Brougham and Jeffrey, originated it. The "Letters on the Catholics" are perhaps the finest example of the use of wit and satire, as a political weapon, that is to be found in our language. Sydney Smith's style is clear, forcible, humorous, and satirical.

DRAMATIC WRITERS.

DRAMATIC WRITERS.

INTRODUCTION.

Dramatic representation in England appears to be founded on what were termed "Miracle Plays," the first of which, in Latin, by Hilarius, an English monk, was written in the beginning of the twelfth century. These "Miracle Plays" were legendary representations of saints and martyrs, founded on the Old and New Testament histories. At a later date we find that they were performed regularly in all the large towns at Whitsuntide, especially at Chester, and hence are termed Chester Mysteries, and Whitsun Plays. Their literary importance was never very great, although traces of similar exhibitions are discoverable in almost every part of Europe. These miracle plays in their turn were succeeded by the "Moralities," or Modern Plays, more fitted for public representation than the "Mysteries," which were but mere parodies upon sacred history. The "Moral Plays" date back to the time of Henry VI. They contained personages representing Mercy, Justice, and Truth, and showed a great advance, inasmuch that they endeavoured to convey moral lessons with some dramatic ingenuity. The early plays were represented in moveable theatres, chiefly by monks, school boys, and members of the various trading corporations.

The following extract gives us some insight into the

mode of proceeding. It relates to the performance of one of the Mysteries at Coventry:—

"Before the suppression of the monasteries, this cittye was very famous for the pageants that were played therein, upon Corpus Christi day. These pageants were acted with mighty state and reverence by the fryers of this house (the Franciscan monastery at Coventry), and conteyned the story of the New Testament, which was composed into old English rime. The theatres for the severall scenes were very large and high; and, being placed upon wheeles, were drawn to all the eminent places of the cittye, for the better advantage of the spectators."

The "Moral Plays" kept possession of the public appreciation some considerable time, partly because of their improved style, and partly because the writers began to introduce popular opinions and historical and current events, and personages in an allegorical and abstract guise. "It was soon manifest that a real human being, with a human name, was better calculated to awaken the sympathies, and keep alive the attention of an audience, and not less so to impress them with moral truths, than a being who only represented a notion of the mind." The substitution of these for the symbolical characters gradually took place during the earlier part of the sixteenth century, and, aided by the general revival of learning, dramatic representation gradually assumed the form with which we are acquainted.

The characteristic qualities of the productions do not, however, afford much scope for literary speculation or critical remark. They are more interesting as antiquarian curiosities than important as literary and historical productions.

The period intervening between the "Moral Plays" and the Early English Drama, properly so called, may be filled up with the "Interludes" of John Heywood, the earliest of which must have been written before A.D. 1521, exhibiting a state of transition to the regular English comedy and tragedy.

Heywood was partly a musician, partly a professed wit, and partly a writer of plays. His dramatic compositions generally represented some ludicrous familiar incident, in a style of the broadest and coarsest farce, with great skill and talent. One, called "The Four P's.," turns upon a dispute between a Palmer, a Pardoner, a Poticary, and a Pedlar (who are the only characters), as to which shall tell the grossest falsehood. An accidental assertion of the Palmer, that he never saw a woman out of patience in his life, takes the rest off their guard, all of whom declare it to be the greatest lie they ever heard; and the settlement of the question is thus brought about amidst much drollery. One of Heywood's chief objects seems to have been to satirize the manners of the clergy, and aid in the cause of the Reformers.

Heywood was succeeded by Nicholas Udall, an eminent scholar, and Master of Westminster School, in an imitation of Plautus and Terence, entitled "Ralph Roister Doister," supposed to have been written in the reign of Henry VIII. The scene is laid in London, and the characters, thirteen in number, exhibit the manners of the middle orders of the people of that day. It is divided into five acts, and the plot is amusing and well constructed.

English comedy proper first appears in the production of John Still (subsequently Bishop of Bath and Wells), entitled "Gammer Gurton's Needle," first enacted in Christ's Church, Cambridge, in 1575.

The first regular tragedy was performed by the gentlemen of the Temple in 1567, and written by T. Sackville, afterwards Lord Buckhurst, and Thomas Norton, a Puritan lawyer. Its title was "Gorboduc; or, Ferrex and Porrex." It is the first English drama of any kind written in blank verse. The subject is taken from the fabulous British annals, originally compiled by Geoffrey of Monmouth in the twelfth century, and is full of desperate scenes and broils.

The earliest English authors of tragedy and comedy

are conspicuous for works of considerable merit, and without admixture. Both are distinctive in their class and character. Within a month the success which attended the production of the first English tragedy, a historical play under the title of "Julius Cæsar," was so great that it was enacted at court—forming the earliest instance on record, according to Collier, in which events from "Roman History" were dramatized in English.

From the year 1562, commenced the second stage of the English drama. Many plays of no importance, save to mark the transition of style, had been produced by Richard Edwards about 1566, by George Whetstone in 1578, and Silly in 1579, who wrote plays on mythological subjects. We have, however, no dramatic work which, apart from its antiquity, possesses any interest to succeeding ages. Ten years afterwards, dramatic literature experienced a vast change, and became a recognized branch of literature.

It should be remembered that nearly all the early dramatic writers were University men, and men of even scholarly attainments, and that a man of letters and wit had a much greater chance of succeeding at that time as a dramatist than as a bookwriter. It was the only way in which he could bring his works before the public. There was no reading public then large enough to support authors who had not some independent income, or were not patronized by the court. Greene, Marlowe, Peele, were all young men together, and all writing for the stage, and to them presently were added the other and greater genius of Shakspeare. It was undoubtedly to dramatic literature that the literature of the Elizabethan age owed its strength. The dramatic form of composition rose at this period with sudden and wonderful brilliancy, and, attracting all the best existing wits, left comparatively little genius to be expended upon the ordinary kinds of poetry and prose.

The extraordinary and sudden stride forward, by which the drama reached the mighty and magnificent

conceptions of Shakspeare, placed it in a position that could never be assailed. It must not, however, be supposed that the theatres in which the representation of these conceptions took place were also progressing in proportion. The following picture of the stage arrangements is taken from Mr. Collier:—

"To form a true idea of the stage on which the Elizabethan plays were acted, we must carry our recollection back to those yellow-painted wooden caravans, that travel round the country fairs, and supply the delighted rustics, in exchange for their pennies, with a tragedy full of ghosts and murder, and thrilling with single combats between valiant warriors in tin armour, who fight with broadswords made of old iron hoops. The travelling stage was often set up in the court-yard of an inn. A wooden erection—little better than what we call a shed—there sheltered the company and their audience. When in 1576 the first licensed theatre was opened at Blackfriars, in London, it was merely a round wooden wall or building, enclosing a space open to the sky. The stage, indeed, was covered with a roof of thatch; but upon the greater part of the *house*—as in modern days we call the spectators—the sun shone and the rain fell without let or hindrance.

"The rude attempts at scenery, in such theatres as the Rose and the Globe, which were among the leading houses, make us smile, who have witnessed the gorgeous scenic triumphs of Kean and his brother managers. Some faded tapestry, or poorly-daubed canvas, hung round the timbers of the stage, at the back of which ran a gallery—eight or ten feet high—to hold those actors who might be supposed to speak from castle-walls, windows, high rocks, or other lofty places. A change of scene was denoted by hanging out, in view of the spectators, a placard with the name of the place—Padua, Athens, or Paris—painted on it. A further stretch of imagination was required from the assembly, when the removal of a dingy throne, and the setting down of a rough table with drinking vessels, were sup-

posed to turn a palace into a tavern; or the exchange of a pasteboard rock for a thorn-branch was expected to delude all into the belief that they saw no longer a pebbly shore, but a leafy forest. An exquisitely comical illustration of this scenic poverty may be found in 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' where the Athenian tradesmen rehearse a play, and act it before Duke Theseus. Funny as it seems, the picture was drawn from the realities of the author's day. The play of 'Pyramus and Thisbe' requires the introduction of a wall upon the stage, that the lovers may whisper their vows through a chink in its masonry. So *Snout*, the tinker, is daubed with plaster, and, coming on the stage, announces to the audience that he is to be considered the wall, and, for a chink, he forms a circle with thumb and fingers, through which the appointment to meet at *Ninny's* tomb is made by the ardent lovers. Then in comes one, with a lantern, a thorn-bush and a dog, who calls himself the *Man in the Moon*, and proceeds to light the midnight scene. An unbelieving critic, who sits among the onlookers, suggests that the man, the bush, and the dog, should get into the lantern, since the appearance of the *Man in the Moon*, carrying the moon in which he lived, was likely to cause some confusion of ideas. The notion of wall and moonshine announcing their respective characters to the audience, is, no doubt, a bit of Shakspeare's native humour; but every day that our great dramatist acted in the Globe, he saw as sorry makeshifts for scenery as the lime-daubed tinker who acted the wall, and the dim tallow-candle, in sore need of snuffing, that sputtered in the lantern of *Moonshine*.

"At one o'clock—on Sundays especially, but also on other days—the play-house flag was hoisted on the roof, announcing that the performance was going to begin; and there it fluttered till the play was over. Placards had already told the public what was to be the performance of the day. The audience consisted of two classes: the *groundlings*, or lower orders, who paid a trifle for admission to the pit; and the *gallants*, who

paid sixpence a piece for stools upon the rush-strewn stage, where they sat in two rows, smoking and showing off their ruffs and doublets, while the actors played between them. The circle of the pit resounded with oaths and quarrelling, mingled with the clatter of ale-pots and the noise of card-playing. Nor did the occupants of the full-dress stools show better breeding than the unwashed groundlings. Noise, tobacco-smoke, and the heavy fumes of ale, formed the main parts of the atmosphere in which our noblest plays were ushered into fame. When the trumpets had sounded, a figure in a long black velvet cloak came forward to recite the prologue. Then the play began; and, if its early scenes did not suit the taste of the audience, a storm of noises arose; hisses, yells, cat-calls, cock-crowing, whistling, drowned the actors' voices, and stopped the progress of the play. In short, Elizabeth's loyal subjects used or abused their lungs just as vigorously as those of Queen Victoria can do in parliament, and out of it as well. The actors—attired in the costume of their own day—played in masks and wigs; and the female parts—the *Violas*, the *Portias*, the *Rosalinds*—were filled by boys, or smooth-faced young men, in women's dress. All was over by three or four o'clock, and then the audience went home to an early supper."

It often happened that the play-writer, as in the case of Shakspeare, was a play-actor as well; but, with all their knowledge, and University learning, we do not find that the players took a very high social position. The biographies of most of them speak plainly as to their mode of life. Whether it was from the loose habits engendered and fostered by their profession, or that the nobles and courtiers looked upon them as servants, but little removed from the jester, who still kept his place at the tables of the great; whatever it was, the social rank of the play-actor was a low one. It may be attributed also to the fact that they led such reckless improvident lives that the stage did fall into a condition

of almost shameless licentiousness. This it was that shocked the Puritans, moved the "good men of every party," and led to the closing of the theatres in 1648.

It has been well said, that, at the close of the reign of Charles the First, "the drama sank with the party that chiefly supported it," and supported it more, perhaps, because of the abhorrence of it which the Puritan felt and manifested.

In 1660, on the Restoration, it arose from the obscurity that had covered it, and appeared in a form distinct and different from that which had before characterized it. While it arose with fresh lustre, it can hardly be said to have become more decent. During the latter part of the Commonwealth, Davenant had been permitted to write and act plays, and at the accession of Charles, two principal playhouses offered their attractions to the public support. One was under the patronage of the king; the other was under the patronage of the Duke of York. The players at the first were called the king's servants.

A considerable improvement took place in the stage and house arrangements; female players were employed, and moveable scenes were introduced. During the ten years that followed the Restoration, the favourite tragedies were of a kind called heroic or rhyming plays, for which the taste and the model had been brought together from France by the returning Court. "They referred solely to very elevated historical characters, and were written in an inflated metaphysical style, as if intended to represent a superior sort of human nature; and all the lines terminated in rhyme." The comedies, however, were full of the most licentious passages. Unfortunately, the Court set an example of such immorality, that the greatest countenance was lent to all manner of debauchery and indecency. Looseness of manners became almost a test of loyalty; and, such being the case, the theatres where the grossest scenes were enacted were the best patronized, and the licence, which had been curbed somewhat before, was resumed

to its fullest extent at the Restoration. The king soon showed that he had a passion for the drama, especially of the Spanish comedies, which abound in profligacy, intrigue, and lewdness. The managers and actors, therefore, in order to secure his approbation, modelled their writings and actions to suit his taste.

It is further on that we must look for the establishment of the steady old drama, which has now got to be called legitimate, where the action is divided into four or five parts, with a superior and inferior plot, and dependent upon the worth of the writing rather than to the acting or machinery. The immorality of the age of the Restoration could not and did not last long; it was succeeded by an age when at least truth and morality were recognized, if not very generally practised.

Accordingly, though the comedies which were produced between 1690 and 1730 were not marked by a very high literary excellence or great imagination, they are undeniably more pure and moral. A more manly and vigorous tone set in, and though a season of bombastic utterances and sentimentalism followed, consequent upon the French influence, yet the drama, in its two great branches, kept steadily progressing. Two new forms of it were engendered, the Farce and the Genteel Comedy; that is, a comedy in which the characters are taken from the higher ranks of society, and partaking of a highly moral and sentimental character. The next age saw the rise of the Melodrama, in which the delineation of the play is helped and assisted by the splendour of the dresses and the scenery.

"It is the common opinion," says Mr. Chambers, "that the literature has declined in our times; and no one can deny that there are not now engaged in it the same superior intellects which gave it such lustre in the days of Elizabeth, or even in those of Queen Anne. For this, however, the chief reason is, perhaps, one of an accidental nature. Successful writing for the stage seems to require a close connection with the theatre

itself, in order that the author may be able to adapt the language, characters, and general structure of the piece to those circumstances, known only to actors, which tend to make dramatic representation effectual. Hence it is found that the greatest dramatists of former times were either themselves players, or maintained a close acquaintance with the theatre. A wide space, however, has been drawn between the literary men of the present day and the actors. Our greatest poets, disdaining to subject their genius to a schooling from the performers, or to bend to considerations of theatrical convenience, have either abstained from dramatic composition or written only what they term dramatic poems; that is, poems in a dramatic form, but not designed for representation. In the stead of better writers, there has arisen a class, consisting partly of actors and managers, who, without the genius of the kindred class of men who flourished in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I., display the same readiness and skill, and, in some instances, no inconsiderable share of ability, in serving the theatres with pieces calculated to affect or entertain common audiences."

ROBERT GREENE.

1560–1592.

Born at Norwich, and educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, at which University he took his M.A. degree in 1583. He was also incorporated with Oxford. His after life was spent amid scenes of dissipation, and, unable to make his own private fortune meet the wants of his extravagance, he had recourse to his pen. He was possessed of a fund of wit and humour, but used it for the purpose of vice and obscenity. As a prose writer he has already been alluded to. As a dramatic writer Greene ranks next to Marlowe.

ORLANDO FURIOSO.
FRIAR BACON AND FRIAR BUNGAY.
THE PINNER OF WAKEFIELD.
A LOOKING-GLASS FOR LONDON AND ENGLAND.

The above are the principal of his plays, and, though they are written in a bombastic and extravagant style, they yet contain many passages of genuine poetry. The last-mentioned play is the most dramatic, though "Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay" is Greene's best comedy. It is about the last play written in which the devil was introduced *in propriâ personâ.*

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.

1563–1593.

Born at Canterbury, the supposed son of a shoemaker. Entered Bennett College, Cambridge, where he took his degree in 1583. He came to an untimely end in a duel which arose out of a tavern broil.

TAMBOURLAINE THE GREAT.
FAUSTUS.
THE JEW OF MALTA.
DIDO, QUEEN OF CARTHAGE.
EDWARD II.

His second play of "Faustus" is rich in dramatic excellence, but still more so is his "Edward II.," which is greatly superior to any he produced. It is the first English historical play, and contains ably drawn characters and splendid scenes.

Marlowe writes with great force and freedom; but he is nevertheless bombastic, and often displays a want of taste.

GEORGE PEELE.

1553–1599.

Born in Devonshire, and educated at Christ Church Oxford, where he obtained the degree of M.A. in 1579. He subsequently removed to London, where he held the post of Superintendent of Pageants. He long maintained the poetical character for which he was

conspicuous at the University. Peele died, after leading an irregular life, in extreme poverty.

THE ARRAIGNMENT OF PARIS.
EDWARD I.
TWO OLD WIVES' TALES.
THE FAIR BATHSHEBA.

"Edward I." and "The Fair Bathsheba" are the best of his productions. The former is rather heavy and monotonous in its style; and in the latter we can detect most delicate poetical imagination, with sound and harmonious verse.

JOHN LYLY.

1553–1601.

Lyly, who has already been noticed as a prose writer, is the author of the following plays:—

ALEXANDER AND CAMPASPE;
SAPPHO;
ENDYMION;
GALATHEA;
MIDAS;
MOTHER BOMBIE;
WOMAN IN THE MOON;
MAID: HER METAMORPHOSIS;
LOVE: HIS METAMORPHOSIS.

Lyly was better suited by genius and imagination for the lighter strains of lyric poetry, than for the drama. He was, nevertheless, the author of the above nine dramatic pieces. Seven of these are in prose, one in blank verse, and one in rhyme. They were all written for Court entertainments; but were, however, performed at theatres, usually by the children of St. Paul's and the Revels. They are all wanting in variety of action and intensity of passion, the first being servilely copied from Plautus.

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

1564–1616.

Shakspeare was born at Stratford-on-Avon, and was educated at the Free Grammar-School of his native town, from which he was removed at an early age. His father, a butcher, was sometime high-bailiff of Stratford. At eighteen years of age he married a farmer's daughter of the name of Anne Hathaway, and a story of some degree of probability tells of his escaping to London to avoid a prosecution on a charge of deer-stealing. In the great city he fell into theatrical society, and became an actor. It has, however, never been stated what characters he sustained, except on the authority of Rowe, who assigns to him the part of the *Ghost* in his own play of "Hamlet." Through the instrumentality of the Earl of Southampton, who had become his patron and who advanced him money, he became at a later period, 1589, proprietor of the Globe Theatre, in Blackfriars. After amassing a considerable amount of money, he returned to his native town, Stratford-on-Avon, where, on his 52nd birthday, he died.

Tragedies.

MACBETH. | ROMEO AND JULIET.
KING LEAR. | HAMLET.
OTHELLO.

Comedies.

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM. | AS YOU LIKE IT.
LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.
MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Historical Plays.

RICHARD III. | KING JOHN.
HENRY V. | CORIOLANUS.
JULIUS CÆSAR.

The above are the principal of the thirty-seven plays which Shakspeare wrote. They not only contain the finest passages, but so display the varied powers of his mind, that to be acquainted with them is to know the

author in his finest vein. In the other plays, however, are some original characters, the portraiture of which displays a happy and marvellous insight into life, and a wonderful power of delineation. Though most of his plays were published separately during his lifetime, the first edition of Shakspeare appears to have been published seven years after his death, in 1623; the second ten years afterwards; the third in 1644, and the fourth after the lapse of another year. "Macbeth," the first of the above list—but written about 1606, and therefore one of his later works—has been well called the most sublime and impressive drama the world has ever beheld; and "King Lear," which was produced about the same date, is perhaps the most original and wonderful of dramatic conceptions. In "Love's Labour's Lost," Shakspeare hits the failing of the day in much the same way as did Lyly in his "Euphues." The alliteration in the title gives evidence of this, and the character of Don Armado is an exemplification of the strained conventionalism of the Italian school. Many of the plots in the plays are founded upon portions of history, and notable use was made of Ralph Holinshed's "Chronicle," from which whole sentences were taken. This does not lessen the value or originality of our author. It shows rather the wonderful power of assimilating the ideas, habits, and thoughts of every-day life, with the loftier creations of his own genius. In creative power he stands alone, and no one ever had such a variety of imagination, with such power of language. "He not only had in himself the genius of every faculty and feeling, but he could follow them intuitively into all their conceivable ramifications, through every change of fortune, or conflict of passion, or turn of thought; and when he conceived a character, whether real or imaginary, he not only entered into all its thoughts and feelings, but seemed instantly, and as if by touching a secret spring, to be surrounded with all the same objects, the same local, outward, and unforeseen accidents which would occur in reality. In reading this author, you do not merely learn what his

characters say—you see their persons. By something expressed or understood, you are at no loss to decipher their peculiar physiognomy, the meaning of a look, the grouping, the by-play, as we might see it on the stage. A word, an epithet, paints a whole scene, or throws us back whole years in the history of the persons represented. His plays are properly expressions of the passions, not descriptions of them. His characters speak like men, not like authors. Passion with him is not some one habitual feeling or sentiment, preying upon itself, growing out of itself, and moulding everything to itself; it is modified by all the other feelings to which the individual is liable, and to which others are liable with him; subject to all the fluctuations of caprice and accident. The dialogues in 'King Lear,' in 'Macbeth,' that between *Brutus* and *Cassius*, and nearly all those in which the interest is wrought up to the highest pitch, afford examples of this dramatic fluctuation of passion."

THOMAS LODGE.

1573–1625.

Born in Lincolnshire, he was educated at Cambridge, and became a scholar of Trinity College. He subsequently settled in London, where he embraced the Catholic religion, and practised as a physician with much success. In 1594 he wrote

WOUNDS FOR CIVIL WAR,

containing much powerful writing, although mixed up with much drunken buffoonery and clownish mirth.

BEAUMONT and FLETCHER.

1576–1625.

Beaumont, born at Grace Dieu, in Leicestershire, was educated at Cambridge, and admitted to the Inner

Temple; but, on account of his preference for authorship, he does not appear to have prosecuted his legal studies. He was the son of a judge, and of a good Leicestershire family. Basking in the sunshine of Shakspeare's influence, he wrote rapidly and well—too much, it is feared, for his strength. He died before he reached the age of thirty.

John Fletcher was born in 1576, the son of the Bishop of Bristol, and educated with his friend Beaumont at Cambridge, where he appears to have distinguished himself. He was born ten years before, and died ten years after his friend Beaumont, with whom he was associated by the strongest ties of friendship, as well as in every transaction, whether of business or pleasure. Fletcher fell a victim to the plague in 1625, and was buried in St. Mary Overy's Church, Southwark, where his monument still remains.

RULE A WIFE AND HAVE A WIFE.
THE WOMAN HATER.
THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS.
THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN.
THE WILD GOOSE-CHASE.
WIT WITHOUT MONEY.
THE CORONATION.

These plays are perhaps the principal of their conjoint productions. They are conspicuous for the ingenuity of their plot, the sprightly nature of the dialogue, and strong power of character delineation. The "Wild Goose-Chase" is the best of their works. Traces of haste and carelessness mark their writings; this, however, is easily ascribed to the number of pieces produced in so short a period.

It is generally allowed that Fletcher created the plays, and that Beaumont laid down the order and plan of development.

It has been said of their writings by Mr. Collier,—"There are such extremes of grossness and magnificence in their drama, so much sweetness and beauty, interspersed with views of nature, either falsely romantic

or vulgar beyond reality; there is so much to animate and amuse us, and yet so much that we would willingly overlook; that I cannot help comparing the contrasted impressions which they make, to those which we receive from visiting some great and ancient city, picturesquely but irregularly built, glittering with spires, and surrounded with gardens, but exhibiting in many quarters the lanes and hovels of wretchedness."

It is related that Beaumont and Fletcher used to frequent taverns, in order to find opportunities for the study of character, and that once when they differed as to the termination of a piece they had written, and maintained the one that the king must be put to death, the other that he ought not, they were both arrested as dangerous characters and for plotting treason.

"The Faithful Shepherdess" is Fletcher's work exclusively, and is exceedingly rich in fancy and feeling.

THOMAS MIDDLETON.

1600–1627.

All known of him is, that he was appointed Chronologer to the city of London, within the above dates. Less of his life is known than of any of his contemporaries.

THE WITCH.
A GAME OF CHESS.
WOMEN BEWARE OF WOMEN.

The latter has all the peculiarity of the strongly-marked character of Middleton's writings. It is supposed, and not without some reason, that the first play of "The Witch," suggested the incantation scene in "Macbeth." The greatest pieces of Middleton are comedies, and they bear favourable comparison with the works of contemporaries.

GEORGE CHAPMAN.

1557–1634.

Little is known of this author, who appears to have been at Oxford at one period of his life. When in London he secured the patronage of Henry, Prince of Wales, and of the Earl of Somerset, and held some position at Court. He is buried in St. Giles-in-the-Fields, where a monument was erected to his memory, by his particular and intimate friend Inigo Jones.

FOUNTAIN OF NEW FASHIONS.
THE WILL OF WOMAN.
EASTWARD HO!
BUSSY D'AMBOISE.

Chapman's best plays are tragic ones, of which "Bussy d' Amboise" stands first. His didactic descriptive passages are considered by Lamb as the nearest approach, of any writers of the time, to Shakspeare.

JOHN MARSTON.

1600–1634.

But few circumstances remain on record of his life. Little is known beyond that he was a student at Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

THE MALCONTENT;
INSATIATE COUNTESS;
WHAT YOU WILL,

are amongst the eight plays Marston has written, and are perhaps the best. He appears to have enjoyed great reputation as a dramatist at the time in which he wrote. This reputation as a writer rests more upon the scorn and indignation he showed at the vices of his time, than upon any sympathy with the finer feelings of humanity.

BENJAMIN JONSON.

1574–1637.

Born at Westminster, he was educated in the school of that name, under Camden. There is some little uncertainty as to his early life. The posthumous son of a clergyman, he was brought up as a bricklayer by his step-father. Subsequently he went to Cambridge, but poverty compelled him to return to his trade. He was introduced by Camden to Sir Walter Raleigh, whose son he accompanied on a Continental tour.

EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR.
EVERY MAN OUT OF HIS HUMOUR.
CYNTHIA'S REVELS.
THE POETASTER.
THE TRAGEDY OF LEGANUS.
CATALINE.
EPICINE.

His principal pieces are considered to be, "Every Man in his Humour," which still keeps possession of the stage, and "Epicine," which Dryden terms a perfect comedy. His productions generally, though hardly fit for representation at the present day, on account of their coarse humour, are acknowledged to form a mint of poetic wealth.

JOHN FORD.

1586–1639.

Born at Islington, in Devonshire. He became a member of the Middle Temple, 1602. His first productions of a literary character appear in conjunction with Rowley, Dekker, and others.

THE LOVER'S MELANCHOLY.
LOVE'S SACRIFICE.
BROTHER AND SISTER.
THE BROKEN HEART.

The "Brother and Sister," which contains scenes of painful interest and deeply wrought feeling, is objec-

tionable, on account of its subject. The pieces are remarkable for their deep pathos, and display perhaps greater genius than evinced by Massinger. Eleven dramas are assigned to him, in which tragedy appears to have been his decided predilection.

PHILIP MASSINGER.

1584–1640.

Born at Salisbury, the son of one of the Earl of Pembroke's retainers, employed as a special messenger to Queen Elizabeth, and educated at St. Alban's Hall, Cambridge, where he was supported by the kindness of the Earl of Pembroke. He appears to have taken no degree, in consequence, as is generally supposed, of embracing the Catholic faith, and thereby alienating himself from his patron and his Protestant friends. Subsequently to this he seems to have led for some years a life of idleness, save in assisting others in their dramatic productions. Little is heard of him till he produced his "Virgin Martyr" in 1622, sixteen years after his arrival in London. From this period he was engaged in writing plays, the last of which appeared six weeks prior to his death, which is noticed in the burial register of St. Saviour's, Southwark, by the entry on that date of one Philip Massinger, a "stranger."

THE OLD LAW.
THE VIRGIN MARTYR.
THE UNNATURAL COMBAT.
THE RENEGADO.
THE NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS.
THE CITY MADAM.
THE FATAL DOWRY. With Others.

An absence of profanity marks all his writings; no coarse, vulgar, or disgusting passages mar his pages. His *Sir Giles Overreach* in "The New Way to Pay Old Debts," and his *Luke* in "The City Madam," are decidedly the most successful delineations of his style. His tragedies possess a calm and dignified seriousness,

touching both the heart, and gratifying the taste. There can be but little doubt that Massinger was the immediate successor of Shakspeare in point of excellence, if we give place to Beaumont, Fletcher, and Jonson.

JOHN WEBSTER.

1600–1661.

Little is recorded of his birth or parentage. He was, however, parish-clerk at St. Andrew's, Holborn, and a member of the Merchant Tailors' Company. He wrote the four following dramas:—

THE WHITE DEVIL;
THE DUCHESS OF MALFY
APPIUS AND VIRGINIA;
THE THRACIAN WONDER.

The characters in "The White Devil" are drawn with great spirit, and the delineation in "The Duchess of Malfy" displays a power and originality of imagination which none of Shakspeare's minor contemporaries ever achieved.

"The plans of his dramas, like those of his contemporaries in general, are irregular and confused, the characters often wildly distorted, and the whole composition in some degree imperfect. Yet there are single scenes in his works, which, as exhibitions of the more violent passions, are inferior to nothing in the whole range of the British drama. He was a man of truly original genius, and seems to have felt strong pleasure in whatever was terrible, even though it might border on extravagance."

JAMES SHIRLEY.

1594–1666.

Born in London in 1594; educated at Merchant Tailors' School, he from thence entered St. John's College,

Oxford. Laud, the then president, refused to admit him to holy orders. Leaving Oxford for Cambridge, he received ordination, and subsequently obtained preferment at St. Albans. Changing his religion, he gave up his living, and became master in the Grammar-School at St. Albans, which, being irksome to him, he shortly resigned, removed to London, resided in Gray's Inn, and became a writer of plays. When the great fire took place in 1666 his house was burnt, which so affected him, that both his wife and himself died within twenty-four hours of each other, and were interred in the same grave.

THE YOUNG ADMIRAL.
THE GRATEFUL SERVANT.
THE LADY OF PLEASURE.
THE BALL.
THE ROYAL MUSTER.
THE GAMESTER.
THE DUKE.
THE TRAITOR.

He entirely belongs to the old school of English dramatists, of which he was no mean cipher. The language he employs is purely that of idiomatic English. His characters, especially female ones, are clothed in purity of thought and language. His "Young Admiral" appears to have been his first licensed play.

THOMAS OTWAY.

1651–1685.

Educated at Winchester School, he was entered a commoner of Christ Church, Oxford, in 1669. Having left the college without a degree, he went to London, and took to the stage; but had very little success as an actor. Not discouraged, however, by his failure as a player, he became an author, and produced, in 1675, "Alcibiades," his first tragedy. Otway's wit procured for him the patronage of the Earl of Plymouth, who obtained for him a cornetcy in the army of Flanders.

He soon gave up his commission, however, not liking the army, and returned to London in great poverty, where he again began to write for the stage. He lived in miserable indigence, and is said to have died of hunger.

ALCIBIADES.
DON CARLOS, PRINCE OF SPAIN.
TITUS AND BERNICE.
THE CHEATS OF SCAPIN.
FRIENDSHIP IN FASHION.
THE ORPHAN.
HISTORY AND FALL OF CAIUS MARIUS.
THE SOLDIER'S FORTUNE.
THE ATHEIST.
VENICE PRESERVED.

"The Orphan" is, perhaps, the most pleasing of all Otway's plays; but the greatest of all his dramatic efforts is his "Venice Preserved," which still keeps possession of the stage. This was his last effort, and is altogether of a higher order than any of his other performances. He wrote, besides plays, numerous poems, and translated various works. His complete writings were published in three volumes, in 1757, and again, in four volumes, in 1813. He was always remarkable for moving the tender passions, and especially valued for the sprightliness of his conversation and the keenness of his wit; but, like the wits of all ages, he was a wretched economist. In comedy, he has been deemed too licentious, reflecting the spirit of the time of Charles II.; but in tragedy, few English poets ever equalled him, and certainly none ever excelled him in touching the passion of love.

NATHANIEL LEE,

1660–1692,

Was the son of Dr. Lee, rector of Hatfield, in Hertfordshire; he received a classical education at Westminster School, and was afterwards elected a

scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge. He failed in obtaining the Fellowship he coveted, and subsequently tried to push his fortune at Court, in which also he was disappointed. Eventually he turned his attention to the stage, and at a very early age made his appearance at the Duke's Theatre, in the character of *Duncan*, in "Macbeth." His imagination at this period overcame his reason, and in 1684 he was conveyed to Bedlam—wild with insanity—where he remained nearly four years. He had the good fortune to recover his reason, but he did not long survive the event. In his latter years he appears to have been supported by charity. He died in London, and was buried in St. Clement's Church.

RIVAL QUEENS.
ALEXANDER THE GREAT.
LUCIUS JUNIUS BRUTUS.
THEODOSIUS.
MITHRIDATES.

These are decidedly the best of his tragedies. In tenderness and genuine passion he is superior to Dryden. The ungoverned fancy which has been ascribed to him are excused as the sallies of youth. A want of discretion is discernible, which otherwise would have rendered his poetical conceptions consistent and methodical. Still, no finer passages are to be found in Dryden than in the wild ardour and martial enthusiasm of Lee's conceptions.

SIR GEORGE ETHERIDGE.

1636–1694.

This gallant and remarkable wit flourished in the reign of Charles II. and James II. Born of a good Oxfordshire family, educated partly at Cambridge, and subsequently at Paris, he, on his return to England, entered one of the Inns of Court, and for a short time studied law, which he eventually relinquished for gayer and more pleasurable pursuits. He was appointed

plenipotentiary at Ratisbon, and after a festival evening, so common at the time, fell down the stairs of his own house, and was killed.

SHE WOULD IF SHE COULD;
COMICAL REVENGE;
EVERY MAN IN HIS MODE,

are amongst his plays, all of which were received with much approval in his time, and gave him a standing amongst such wits of the time as Sedley, Buckingham, and Rochester.

JOHN DRYDEN.

1631–1701.

Dryden, the son of Erasmus Dryden, of Titchmarch, and of a good Northamptonshire family, was born on the 9th of August in the year above-mentioned. He was educated at Westminster School; matriculated at and afterwards elected a scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge. His circumstances of life were the reverse of affluent. He married Lady Elizabeth Howard, sister of the Earl of Berkshire, by whom he had three sons; and, after a long life of labour, fatigue, and harass of mind, Dryden died of gout, aged 69 years.

WILD GALLANT.
RIVAL LADIES.
ALL FOR LOVE.
THE INDIAN EMPEROR.
THE REHEARSAL.
THE CONQUEST OF GRENADA.
DON SEBASTIAN.
THE SPANISH FRIAR.

These are some of his plays, the latter comedy being decidedly good. "The Conquest of Grenada," though full of genius, is extravagant in the extreme. His plays have fallen completely into oblivion. Still he was a powerful reasoner, strong in language, imagery, and information, but marked by extravagance and ab-

surdity. As entire works few possess real merit, but brilliant scenes are contained in most of them.

JOHN CROWNE,

1704,

Was the son of an independent preacher in Nova Scotia. Having come to England in the capacity of gentleman-usher to an old lady, he subsequently became an author by profession, and enjoyed the equivocal honour of the patronage of the Earl of Rochester, as a dramatic rival of Dryden. Though he retained the favour of the Court after he had been cast off by Lord Rochester, from having severely satirized the Whigs, he, nevertheless, died in deep poverty and great obscurity. He wrote altogether eighteen pieces, seventeen of which were printed. The most worthy of mention are,

THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM;
SIR COURTLY NICE.

His bombastic tragedies are rhymed, and are among the worst specimens of the corrupt taste which then ruled the drama. All his plots are perplexed and undramatic; yet in his comedies, which are his best performances, there is considerable merit in his portraiture of character.

GEORGE FARQUHAR.

1678–1707.

Born at Londonderry, in 1678, and son of the Dean of Armagh, his early education was a provincial one; but, as soon as qualified, he matriculated at Trinity College, Dublin. He was considered, however, among his fellow-students one of the dullest young men of his time. On quitting college he entered upon an engagement with the manager of the Dublin Theatre: this occupation he relinquished after a brief stay, in consequence of wounding a fellow-tragedian. His abilities

and agreeable address commended him to the patronage of the Earl of Orrery, who gave him a lieutenant's commission in his own regiment.

LOVE IN A BOTTLE.
THE CONSTANT COUPLE.
INCONSTANT.
TWIN RIVALS.
THE RECRUITING OFFICER.
THE BEAUX'S STRATAGEM.

Of these comedies the last is decidedly the best, containing some ludicrous and natural incidents in a most accurately arranged plot. The opinions of critics upon his writings have been naturally various. It has been objected that his productions were too hasty, and his scenes equally if not more gross than other writers of his time. His "Twin Rivals" was one of his most perfect, regular, and finished plays. "The Beaux's Stratagem," which he wrote in six weeks, under the depression of illness, enjoyed a successful run, and kept large audiences in roars of laughter, while its unhappy and still youthful author was stretched on a death-bed, rendered more distressing to him by the reflection that he was about to leave two daughters unprovided for. Farquhar wrote with great ease and humour; "but, though some of his plays have been acted at no remote date, there is one powerful reason for the neglect into which they have now fallen. The characters are almost without exception profligates, whose language and conduct are rather fitted to shock than to please the comparatively refined readers of the present age."

WILLIAM WYCHERLY.

1650–1715.

Son of David Wycherly, of Cleve, in Shropshire. At fourteen he was sent to France, and on his return to England entered as gentleman commoner of Queen's College, Oxford. Like more than one of his predeces-

sors, he abandoned the law for the wit and gaiety of the time, and became an especial favourite of the notorious Duchess of Cleveland, and an associate of the Duke of Buckingham. In an illness he was visited by the king, who on his recovery offered him the tutorship to his son, which offer was revoked upon his marriage with the Countess of Drogheda. After this he spent several years in prison, and just eleven days before his death he married a second time, a young lady with a fortune of £1,500.

LOVE IN A WOOD.
GENTLEMAN'S DANCING MASTER.
COUNTRY WIFE.
PLAIN DEALER.

As a dramatist he stood high. The "Country Wife" was his most popular production, and the "Plain Dealer," that which caused his marriage with the Countess of Drogheda. His plays, from their corruption and profligacy, are now buried in the history of the past.

NICHOLAS ROWE.

1673–1718.

The son of John Rowe, sergeant-at-law, of Beckford, in Bedfordshire. He was educated at Westminster, under Busby, and chosen one of the King's scholars. When sixteen years of age he entered as a student of the Middle Temple. At nineteen, being left his own master, he turned his attention to poetry, and withdrew from the less attractive reading for his profession. He was under-secretary for three years when the Duke of Newcastle was Secretary of State, and after being made poet-laureate at the accession of George I., he was appointed one of the land-surveyors of the Customs of the port of London. He was also clerk of the council to the Prince of Wales, and was made secretary of the presentations by Lord-Chancellor Parker. He died at

the age of forty-five and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

THE AMBITIOUS STEPMOTHER.
TAMERLANE.
THE FAIR PENITENT.
ULYSSES.
THE ROYAL CONVERT.
THE BITER.
JANE SHORE.
LADY JANE GREY.

Besides these plays, he published an edition of Shakspeare, in which he ventures on various restorations of his author's text. In the composition of his dramas Rowe shows little depth of refined art in the portraying of character, though he writes with the easy grace of a well-educated man of fashion. His versification is harmonious, and the language in the dialogues natural. His best performance is "The Fair Penitent," which displays great power of imagination, and contains several well-wrought passages.

SIR JOHN VANBRUGH,

1666–1726,

Was of foreign lineage, his grandfather being a citizen of Ghent, who fled to England during the persecutions of the Duke of Alva, and died in 1646, leaving a handsome fortune to his family. Sir John was born in either London or Chester, and very little is known of him till he began to write for the stage. In his latter years he turned architect, and designed Blenheim House for the Duke of Marlborough.

THE PROVOKED WIFE.
THE PROVOKED HUSBAND.

As mere literary productions, these are worthy of much admiration; yet so libertine are they, not merely in language, but in plot, in sentiment, and general tendency, that they are calculated to corrupt as well as

to please. They are now banished, not only from the stage, but from the closet.

WILLIAM CONGREVE.

1669–1729.

Born at Bardsey, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and educated in Ireland, where his father held a staff-appointment in the army. He received the finish to his education at Trinity College, Dublin, under Dr. Ashe. Soon after the Revolution he was sent to England and became a student in the Temple. Fortune seems to have favoured him in a special manner: he received the patronage of Lord Halifax, who gave him appointments under government worth £600 a year; and again, in the reign of George I., his emoluments were raised to £1,200 a year by his secretaryship for the Island of Jamaica. Towards the close of his life he was a great invalid, and latterly suffered from total blindness. He died at the age of 60, at his house in Surrey Street, Strand, leaving the bulk of his fortune to the Duchess of Marlborough, daughter-in-law of the Great Duke.

OLD BACHELOR.
DOUBLE DEALER.
MOURNING BRIDE.
JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

His only tragedy was his "Mourning Bride," which possesses a higher degree of merit than the other more serious plays of his day: passages in it are considered by Johnson as finer than any of Shakspeare's. He appears to shine rather in a brilliant stream of wit than in any one particular passage. He was a perfect master, moreover, of the rules of dramatic art. His works are those of a mind replete with imagery and quick in combination. He surpasses not only all the dramatists, but every English comic writer whatever, in wit: he lavishes this quality upon his writings only too

abundantly, causing every character to speak with nearly the same brilliancy. For this and other reasons, the persons of his plays are allowed to be not very exact representations of nature.

GEORGE LILLO.

1693–1739.

A jeweller near Moorgate, London, was educated as a Protestant Dissenter. He produced seven dramas, three of which are printed in every collection of acting plays. These three are:—

GEORGE BARNWELL;
ARDEN OF FAVERSHAM;
FATAL CURIOSITY.

To exhibit the progress from smaller to greater crimes is the sole purpose Lillo has in view in all his plays. The impure passion of Barnwell, the ill-suppressed passion of Arden's wife for the lover of her youth, and the impatience under poverty of the Wilmots (in "Fatal Curiosity"), are the three beginnings of vice, all of which terminate in murder. The latter work stands as a masterpiece of dramatic construction, and the catastrophe is eminently appalling and tragic. It is considered scarcely inferior in construction to the "Œdipus Tyrannus" of Sophocles. In both, the means apparently tending to happiness produce the most agonizing misery. The inflated language is, however, by no means equal to the construction.

THOMAS SOUTHERNE.

1659–1746.

Born in Dublin, and educated at that University. At eighteen he quitted college, and entered himself a member of the Middle Temple. He too, like Wycherly, abandoned the law for the more seductive attractions

of the Muses. He appears to have entered the army at the time of Monmouth's rebellion, and served under the Duke of York. He was the longest lived dramatist on record, reaching his eighty-sixth year. The latter years of his life were spent, unlike many of his contemporaries, in ease and retirement, arising from the sale of his commission, and the profits on his dramatic works—

ISABELLA; OR, THE FATAL MARRIAGE;
OROONOKO;
THE SPARTAN DAME;

with seven others of lesser importance. From his "Oroonoko," he appears to have been the first English writer who inveighed against the traffic in slaves, and in this play he deals strong invectives against the system. The characteristic power of his writing may be judged from this piece and his play of "Isabella." They do not display a very high order of genius.

EDWARD YOUNG.

1681–1765.

The son of Dr. Edward Young, Dean of Sarum, and a foundation-scholar of Winchester: finishing his education there, he was nominated to a law-fellowship at All Souls, by Archbishop Tenison, where he took his doctor's degree in 1719. In this year he was appointed tutor in Lord Exeter's family. Under the Duke of Wharton's patronage he stood, but was the unsuccessful candidate, for Cirencester. In 1728 he was appointed chaplain to George II., and at the age of eighty, clerk of the closet to the Princess Dowager of Wales, shortly after which he died.

BUSIRIS.
THE REVENGE.
THE BROTHERS.

The whole writings of Young may be estimated as gloomy advocates for religion and morality. He possessed more poetic than dramatic excellence.

SAMUEL FOOTE.

1720–1777.

The son of the M.P. at that time for Tiverton. He was educated at Worcester College, Oxford, which he left before the usual time on account of some extravagance. He entered upon the study of the law, but his volatile disposition led him soon to abandon it. He married a lady of considerable fortune, which union proved very unhappy. A separation having taken place, he abandoned himself to all the vices of the town, but particularly gaming. His fortune becoming exhausted, he took, from sheer necessity, to the stage, on which he first appeared in the character of Othello, and miserably failed. He acted a little better in comedy, however, but never really succeeded until he began to represent characters in his own plays. In 1747 he opened a small theatre in the Haymarket, and here commenced his career as an author, by producing a series of satirical entertainments. After having one of his legs amputated, in consequence of a severe fall from his horse when riding out with the Duke of York, he continued to act with a cork leg. Having become afflicted with paralysis and loss of spirit, he began to travel for health, but died suddenly at Dover, on his way to Paris.

The plays of Foote in a complete form may be easily obtained. The following, however, are those most worthy of mention, though they are now seldom or ever acted:—

THE MINOR.
THE ENGLISHMAN RETURNED FROM PARIS.
THE BANKRUPT.
THE ORATORS.
THE LAME LOVER.
THE MAYOR OF GARRATT.
THE LIAR.

In "The Minor" he holds up to ridicule the Methodists; the passion for travelling in the second; the newspapers in the third; the debating societies in the

fourth; and the Bar in "The Lame Lover." The last two in the list not being so exclusively adapted to the failings of his own time, have kept the stage longer than any other of his pieces. Foote's peculiar and unrivalled talents for colloquial wit, conversational power, aptness of repartee, and powers of mimicry and punning, aided by matchless self-possession, with utter disregard for the feelings of any one, are very faintly shadowed forth in his writings.

GEORGE COLMAN,

1733–1794,

Was born at Florence, the son of Francis Colman, English representative at the court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. He was godson of George II., educated at Westminster, and from thence became a student at Christ Church College, Oxford; after which he entered Lincoln's Inn, and was eventually called to the Bar. At the close of his theatrical season in 1785, he was seized with palsy; and at the beginning of the season 1789 he suffered from derangement of intellect, which left him an idiot. In this unhappy condition he was entrusted to private cure at Paddington, where he died.

POLLY HONEYCOMB;
THE JEALOUS WIFE;
THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE;
THE MERCHANT;
FATAL CURIOSITY;
MANAGER IN DISTRESS;

are selected from about thirty-four of his plays which possess considerable merit, containing well-drawn characters and highly effective scenes, directing the shaft of ridicule against the prevailing and fashionable follies of his time.

DAVID GARRICK.

1716-1799.

David Garrick was born at Hereford, the son of Peter Garrick, a captain in the army, whose family chiefly resided at Lichfield. At ten years of age he was sent to the Lichfield Grammar School. When only twelve years of age, he evinced a strong leaning towards the theatrical profession, by performing with great credit the part of Sergeant Kite, in "The Recruiting Officer." After a short visit to Lisbon, he returned to London, and received a classical education at the hands of Dr. Johnson; he then entered Lincoln's Inn, intending to embrace the law as a profession. After having become the recipient of a legacy of £1,000, he joined his brother as a wine merchant. The stage, however, had more allurements for him, and in 1741 he was engaged by Mr. Giffard, of Goodman's Fields Theatre, where he attempted the character of Richard III. with such great success that theatres in all parts of London were deserted in consequence of the audiences flocking to hear and see the performance of Garrick, which took the world by storm. His success quickly raised him to the head of his profession. While a manager, he carefully expunged from the stage anything of an immoral tendency; and the purity of the English drama was more fully carried out under his administration than under that of any of his predecessors.

Whilst on a Christmas visit to Lord Althorp, he was taken ill and returned to London, where, after a few days' illness, he died at his house in the Adelphi. He was buried with great funereal pomp in Westminster Abbey.

THE LYING VALET.
MISS IN HER TEENS.
LETHE.
THE GUARDIAN.
THE ENCHANTER.
NECK OR NOTHING.
THE IRISH WIDOW.

These are amongst those works known to be of his authorship: he, moreover, altered and adapted several other pieces to the present exigencies and requirements of the stage. From the above list, the "Lying Valet" and "Miss in her Teens" are unquestionably the best. Garrick's forte was decidedly that of an actor rather than an author; and it can be justly remarked that he gave a popularity and importance to the Drama equivalent to that which marked it in the Elizabethan age.

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.

1751–1816.

Born at Dorset Street, Dublin, and educated at Harrow. After leaving the latter he entered the Society of the Middle Temple. His life was of a dramatic and chequered character throughout.

In 1776 Sheridan became one of the managers of Drury Lane Theatre; three years prior to which he married Miss Elizabeth Linley, through the instrumentality of whose father he was mainly indebted for his connection with the theatre. In 1780 we find him in Parliament—under the administration of Fox—member for Stafford. Under the Rockingham Administration he became Under-Secretary of State. His political speeches were marked more by perpetual wit and eloquence than for depth and logic.

The theatrical career of Sheridan terminated with his authorship. His declining years were beset with difficulty and pecuniary embarrassment, which preyed upon his mind. He found himself deserted in the hour of adversity by all his former friends, with the exception of his physician and a few of his poetical and literary associates.

A TRIP TO SCARBOROUGH.
THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.
THE TEMPEST.
THE CRITIC.
PIZARRO.
THE CAMP.

The "School for Scandal" has been acknowledged to surpass any comedy of modern time. His dramatic art is everywhere conspicuous in the ludicrous incidents and situations which it contains. This and "The Critic" are the best plays that Sheridan ever wrote. Both are decidedly most happy efforts of his pen.

GEORGE COLMAN THE YOUNGER.

1762–1836.

The son of the dramatist of the same name, whose writings have been already noticed. He received his education at Westminster, Christ Church College, Oxford, and King's College, Aberdeen, and afterwards entered the Middle Temple. His predilection for the drama caused him speedily to relinquish his legal pursuits, and upon the death of his father he became manager of Covent Garden Theatre, the duties of which he discharged with zeal and energy. He was a favourite with George IV., and was, in conjunction with Sheridan, one of the most witty ornaments at the Royal table. His pecuniary difficulties forced him to seek refuge in the King's Bench, from which his Majesty released him by appointing him Examiner of Plays, at a salary of £400 a year. He died in London.

THE POOR GENTLEMAN.
TWO TO ONE.
TURK AND NO TURK
NEW HAY IN THE OLD MARKET.
BLUE BEARD.
THE IRON CHEST.
JOHN BULL.
THE HEIR-AT-LAW.
LOVE LAUGHS AT LOCKSMITHS.

These are the best of the twenty-three pieces written by him. In his heroic pieces he displays much vigour and intellect, recalling much that was admirable in the style and thought of the ancient dramatists.

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A HANDBOOK

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WOODFALL AND KINDER,
MILFORD LANE, STRAND, W.

A

HANDBOOK

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

POETS.

BY

WILLIAM GEORGE LARKINS,

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LONDON:
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS,
THE BROADWAY, LUDGATE.
1867.

NOTE.

As in the study of the Prose Literature, the student will do well to read carefully the introduction to each period before commencing the study of the individual authors.

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POETS.

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HANDBOOK

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

POETS.

INTRODUCTION.

The Bard among the Britons, and the Gleeman among the Saxons, were two most important personages. To their keeping were entrusted the history and records of their nation and people, which they were required to religiously preserve and hand down to posterity with scrupulous fidelity. In order to ensure this fidelity in the absence of written documents, the facts were embodied in such a form that the ring of the words, the jingle of the lines, and a certain alliteration and rhyme, should help the memory to retain the impression. For this reason, therefore, nearly all the early British literature, especially the historical, is in verse, and devoted to the recounting of the deeds of warriors renowned in battle. After the introduction of Christianity, the Scripture narrative offered fit subjects, which were treated in the same manner.

The Bard held a different position from the Gleeman. He was generally of high rank, often a priest or prophet. His office was sacred, and entitled him to respect and obedience. The Gleeman, on the contrary, was a wan-

dering minstrel, who, as night fell—the "shadow covering of creatures" as he would have said—would take his place by the "mead bench," and touch his harp, the "wood of joy," the "glee-bearer," and to its strains sing or relate his glee or song of joy. The sturdy warriors, as his "glee" was in praise of heroes who died covered with wounds and glory in battle, or called for vengeance on victorious enemies, would be roused to enthusiasm and revenge. The present, too, was as often his theme as the past. He sang the virtues of the brave chieftain whose hospitality he experienced, and exulted over his enemy. He stung the cowardly with his sharp scorn, and held out the reward of bright eyes and full mead cup to the brave, who lived to see the end of the battle, and promised long draughts of ale out of the enemy's skull in Odin's hall to the hero that might be slain. His memory was well stored with the stories and legends of his country, which he wove into metre as he grew skilful. To the records of the past he added the story of his own day, and thus carried the news of events from one part to another, and perpetuated what might otherwise have been forgotten. Such was the Saxon Gleeman, who played no unimportant part in the Saxon drama, although he looms but very indistinctly, in the dim twilight of 1,500 years ago. His profession required aptitude, learning, and an untiring nature. The character of the verses which he strung together has been thus described. "The poetry of the Anglo-Saxons was neither modulated according to foot-measure, like that of the Greeks and Romans, nor written with rhymes, like that of many modern languages. Its chief and universal characteristic was a very regular *alliteration*, so arranged that in every couplet there should be two principal words in the first line beginning with the same letter, which letter must also be the initial of the first word, on which the stress of the voice falls in the second line. The only approach to a metrical system yet discovered is, that two risings and two fallings of the voice seem necessary to each

perfect line. Two distinct measures are met with, a shorter and a longer, both commonly mixed together in the same poem; the former being used for the ordinary narrative, and the latter adopted when the poet sought after greater dignity. In the manuscripts the Saxon poetry is always written continuously, like prose; but the division of the lines is generally marked by a point."

Neither the character nor the mode of life of the adventurous Norsemen were calculated to produce a vivid imagination. Living principally upon the sea, and depending upon its fish for food, engendered in them a sternness of disposition which was in direct contrast with the more inland and southern nations.

To be a brave man and a bold fisherman, was the manly excellence to which their youth endeavoured to attain, and only such were allowed to join them in their expeditions. These expeditions were chiefly to other lands in search of luxuries, and it often happened, as in the case of England, that they found the new country so inviting that they destroyed upon the beach the "sea-horses" which had brought them over the "wave paths," in order that retreat might be impossible to any.

This love of adventure and the sea has left its mark upon the English character. In our introduction to English prose, it is shown how the language and character of the literature was affected by the changes consequent upon its growth, and the infusion of new blood and new ideas at the Conquest. It is not out of place here, in order to account for the peculiarly unimaginative character of the poetry of the same period, to consider briefly how far that comes to be so, and what permanent effect was produced on the English character by the descent of the Northmen.

As we have just said, they were bold and adventurous. The sea makes men brave; there can be no cowardly fishermen; moreover, they are frequently compelled to sail long distances, through their calling. It may be that, without a guide and tempest tossed, the first settlers in Britain from the Scandinavian shore arrived by

accident. Any way they did come, and that pretty rapidly too, till they had moulded into the type of English nationality marks too strongly fixed to be removed. Till they settled down, they were little more than a heterogeneous mass of fighting thieves, wandering about where they listed and without impediments. The Norman Conquest was the last act in the long drama of history which finally settled the nationality, and this nationality possessed a far greater proportion of the Saxon and Danish element than any other. The fine bold spirit which is manifested to the present day by the Anglo-Saxon race is due to this fact. The spirit of adventure and the love of the sea is distinctly from the north, and the English have given evidence of it at all times. Our Alpine clubs, our love of open-air sports, of hunting and yachting and boating, is all due to the Viking blood which runs in our veins. On the other hand, our love of buying, selling, and bartering is an exemplification of our Saxon nature. To this we also owe our sense of right and duty, and the very bottom of our English character. Had we remained purely Saxon, our condition would have been somewhat like that of the Dutch at the present day. In the Dutch character we have a condensation of all that appertains to the Saxon. It is a nobler one than we generally allow it to be. They are phlegmatic, but they keep out of trouble. We hear little of what is doing in Holland, yet we are daily receiving proofs of their industry and thrift. They never go to war for an idea, but they can fight bravely—as we know to our cost as a nation—when put to it. The Norman Conquest parted us from them, and by looking at them and their character we can understand what kind of people we might have been, and the precise effect that the Norman blood had in the moulding of the type of our nationality.

A steady-going, business-loving, adventure-seeking people were not, therefore, likely to produce much in the way of imaginative writing, and this is the reason why there is so little Anglo-Saxon poetry, in the true sense of

the word, and so little original invention displayed in what has been preserved to us. In the greatest and longest Saxon poem there are only five similes.

Among the oldest specimens of British poetry may be mentioned some scraps of Irish verse, which are ascribed to the fifth century, and the "Psalter of Cashel," which is the oldest existing manuscript of Irish literature, and is a collection of the metrical legends which had been for ages sung by the bards. It seems to have been compiled by a personage who combined the offices of Bishop of Cashel and King of Munster. The poems of Taliesin and Merlin, with those of other Welsh bards and prophets, date from about the sixth century. The Welsh Triads, which are sets of proverbs and events arranged in threes, are scarcely older than the thirteenth century.

A considerable quantity of Anglo-Saxon poetry has been handed down to us; the larger portion of it dating from a period subsequent to the introduction of Christianity. Like the British poetry, it is devoted to the praise of warriors and their deeds.

ANGLO-SAXON WRITINGS.

Of the Saxon verse that has come down to us, the chief pieces are the "Romance of Beowulf," and "Caedmon's Paraphrase."

"Beowulf" is a poem of 6,000 lines, and has for its hero a Danish soldier who braves many dangers and goes through many adventures both on land and water. He afterwards slays a monster named Grendel; but in an attack upon an enormous dragon, is himself slain. All this is described with much minuteness, and affords a tolerable idea of the customs and beliefs of the time in which it was written, when no story was considered complete without some such fable as above, and every hero, to lay claim to the title, was required to perform some prodigy of valour, or attack and slay a monster or dragon. Many beautiful metaphors occur in "Beowulf," and from them may be picked out one

which is a charming example of their simplicity. Speaking of the warriors who are slain in battle, it is said of them that "They lay aloft, put to sleep with their swords." Although metaphors are common, yet of similes there is a great scarcity—only five are found in the whole of this long poem. The date at which the poem was written is supposed to be much older than that of the manuscript which we possess. Unfortunately, it was greatly injured in the fire at the Cotton Library in 1731, and a considerable portion of it is unintelligible; there seems to be but little doubt, however, that the original poem was composed among the continental Angles, and brought into England about the end of the fifth century, and that the earliest Saxon form of the work dates only from the seventh century. There are many allusions and phrases throughout the work which prove that the writer must have been a Christian.

"Caedmon's Paraphrase." Caedmon was originally a cowherd, near Whitby, in Northumbria, and the story of his inspiration is as follows:—It was the custom in those days for each to sing in turn, as the harp was pushed round the hall at supper. This Caedmon could never do; and when he saw his turn coming, he used to slip out of the room, blushing for want of skill and eager to hide his shame. One night, having left the hall, he lay down to sleep in the stable; and as he slept he dreamed that a stranger came to him and said, "Caedmon, sing me something." "I know nothing to sing," said the poor herd, "and so I had to slink away out of the hall." "Nay," said the stranger, "but thou hast something to sing." "What must I sing?" "Sing the Creation," replied the stranger; upon which words of sweet music began to flow from the lips that had been sealed so long. Caedmon awoke, knew the words he had been reciting, and felt a new-born power in his breast. The mantle of song had fallen on him; and when, next day, before the Abbess Hilda and some of the scholars of the place, he

told what had occurred, they gave him a passage of the Bible, which he was to turn into poetry, in order to test his proclaimed skill. A few hours afterwards he presented them with a long poem of surpassing sweetness and power, and from that time forward the cowherd monk of Whitby devoted his life to the composition of religious poetry. It is supposed that Caedmon died about 680. Some have averred that there were two priests of the same name, the elder of whom composed the lines on the "Creation," and that the younger was the author of the "Paraphrase." Bede thus sums up the works of Caedmon:—"He sang of the creation of the world and the origin of the human race, and the whole history as found in Genesis, concerning the going forth of Israel out of Egypt and their entrance into the land of promise; of very many other narratives in Holy Scripture, of the Incarnation of our Lord, His Passion, Resurrection and Ascension into heaven; of the descent of the Holy Ghost, and the teaching of the Apostles. He also composed many verses concerning the terror of the judgment to come, and the fearfulness of the punishments of hell, and the sweetness of the heavenly kingdom; besides a great many others on the loving-kindnesses and judgments of God."

"The Battle of Finsborough," "The Traveller's Song," full of geographical definitions and names, and a fragment of a poem called "Judith," are the other principal works that have come down to us. The latter is found in the same manuscript volume that contains "Beowulf," and has been described as "an Anglo-Saxon romance," if the term may be used to anything in Anglo-Saxon literature, "since, while the outline of the story is taken from Jewish history, the tone, the descriptions, and many of the incidents present the broadest local colouring, and breathe the full Teutonic spirit." The opening of the poem is wanting, and the exact date of its authorship has not been ascertained. It most likely, however, belongs to the seventh century,

the time when a great literary stir took place in Wessex.

In the "Anglo-Saxon Chronicle" several poems of great vigour are to be found. The best are the "Brunanburgh War Song; or, Athelstan's Song of Victory," and the "Elegy on King Edgar the First."

The first—the "Waterloo Ode" of the ninth century—is a triumphal chant occasioned by the great victory won by Athelstan over the Danes from Ireland under Anlaf, and the Scots under their king Constantine, at Brunanburgh.

A short portion of it translated reads thus:—"Nor was there ever yet a greater slaughter of people brought about in this island before this with the edge of the sword, according to that which old sages tell us by book, since Angles and Saxons came up hither from the east, sought Britain over the broad main, as proud artificers of war overcame the alien race [Welsh], got possession—the earls keen after glory!—of the land."

The "Elegy on King Edgar" is a specimen of rather a later period, when the Saxon literature was on the decline. It is "short, yet diffuse—meagre, but obscure," and though many of the old, homely, vivid metaphors of the old gleemen are retained, there is a lack of fire and vividness.

In 1166 there was a song current about the rowing of Canute past Ely. "Pleasantly sang the monks of Ely" is the commencement of it; and William of Malmesbury also mentions a song by Aldred, the last Saxon archbishop of York, who encroached somewhat on the land belonging to the Church. St. Goderich, born at Walpole, in Norfolk, and who died in 1170, chanted a hymn in rhyme, which he said was told him by the Virgin. He also wrote a few other poems.

NORMAN WRITERS.

If the Norman Conquest was the cause of a great change in the manner and character of the prose

literature, it had none the less effect upon poetry. It introduced into England the Norman romance. The French poetry of the age was divided into two divisions or schools, the Norman and the Provençal. The poets of the one were called Trouveres, and those of the other Troubadours. The language of the Trouveres was called the Langue d'Oyl, and that of the Troubadours the Langue d'Oc. They were two separate dialects, and were thus distinguished by the difference in their pronunciation of the peculiar words used for our yes.

These two dialects presented a considerable difference, none the less so than did their poetry: the Trouvere poetry was essentially epic, as suited the Franco-Germanic character, which occupied the north of France, while the Troubadours delighted in lyrical effusions.

The language of *oc*, spoken in the south of France, "blazed out a brief day of glory, was then trampled down, with all its lovely garlands of song, by Montfort and his crusaders, and now exists merely as the rude *patois* of the province that bears its name." The Provençal literature had its origin in the peaceful intercourse which took place between the Moors and Spanish Christians during the ninth and tenth centuries, by which the latter became acquainted with and learnt to imitate the Arabiac poetry and prose.

The Arabs possess a keener sense of poetry, their brains are more deeply and closely convoluted, and their internal organs of sense are finer than those of mixed races. They have produced more poets than any other nation. They are brilliant but not solid, and they were affected but little by the learning of Greece and Italy. They could not understand the classical writers; they thought Pindar and Euripides cold, and their greatest philosopher read Aristotle's "Metaphysics" forty times before he understood it. As poets, therefore, they were essentially superficial. They had no dramatic or epical poetry, only lyrical. They were fond of the study of nature, and laid the foundation of

many a modern science, though it was the mystical they sought to find out. They were spare livers, tellers of tales and singers of songs. In mere matter of rhyme they excelled greatly. They delighted in the most intricate: three or four rhymes in a line is a common occurrence in their poetry. Their influence throughout Italy and the south of Europe was immense, and imparted to it a luxuriance and ingeniousness which marks it most distinctly. The whole south of France was, therefore,—by the intercourse which has been referred to above—affected by them, and throughout Provence was diffused a taste for rhyme and superficial love poetry.

The character of the poetry of "those children of the burning south," distinguished by an excessive admiration and idolization of the female sex, and the greatest possible ingenuity in inventing and "imagining every condition of the passion of love," was to a large extent that of the Catalam minstrelsy, which took up the strain, carried it into the south of France, and gave rise to the Troubadour poetry. Love is its principal though not its only inspiration. Certain historical subjects, that required but little trouble and learning, were sometimes chosen for themes. The realities of every-day life were, however, neglected, and imaginary events and characters supply the place. This very fact, in such an age, was, perhaps, the secret of its dissolution. The unimaginative minstrel, who could sing only of the Court of Love, and could imagine no greater delight than the successful prosecution of a suit, found but little response to his songs amid the fighting and mourning of the south of France during the thirteenth century, and so it gradually faded out. Some attempt was made to revive it, but without success. In its flourishing time the "gay science," as it was called, "was eagerly cultivated in every part of Western Europe, and kings were proud to rank themselves among its members. Our own Richard Cœur de Lion not only entertained at his court some of the most celebrated

Troubadours of Provence, but himself composed several *sirventes* which are still extant. A *tenson*, the joint composition of himself and his favourite minstrel, Blondel, is said, according to the well-known story in Matthew Paris, to have been the means of Blondel's discovering the place of the king's confinement in Germany.

"Almost the whole of the poetry of the Troubadours falls under two heads: the *tenson* and the *sirvente*. The former was a kind of literary duel, or dialogue controversial, between two rival Troubadours, on some knotty point of amatory ethics, and often took place before, and was decided by, a Court of Love. The latter was employed on themes of war, or politics, or satire."

The Normans, who spoke the language of *oyl*, were not satisfied with the love stories of the south. They adopted all the romances and tales, and made the southern poetry more narrative; and, by this means, the more beautiful of the Eastern stories and poems found their way into Christendom, where they were adopted and clothed in a fresh garment, and through the Troubadours to the Trouveres and Jongleurs, who sang them in England around the Norman hearths.

The Langue d'Oyl has grown into modern French, and exercised an influence upon our literature in more ways than one. The Norman soldiers delighted in the old lays of the Trouveres, who sang of knights and their deeds of valour. When, therefore, they settled down in England, nothing was more natural than that they should give rise to a "new generation of poets, who should learn in the Normanized island to sing in the Norman tongue."

The poetry of the Trouveres had therefore a far more important and lasting influence upon English literature than did that of the Troubadours.

The "Romance Literature," as it is called, embraces three great cycles: the Danish being the first and oldest, Charlemagne the second, and the Arthurian,

devoted to Arthur and his Round Table. Two others may be mentioned which embrace the Crusades and their efforts to recover the Holy Sepulchre, and the Alexandrian, or the romances of the ancient world and its heroes.

The first story in the Danish cycle is that of Haveloc the Dane, which was current in England at the Conquest. The scene is laid in Great Grimsby, where there is a Haveloc street and a Haveloc stone. The arms of the town are also a giant or big man, with a little prince under one arm and a princess under the other, with the words "Haveloc and Goldebura" written underneath.

The "Chanson de Roland," or narrative of the death of Roland in battle, is the oldest of the romances of the Charlemagne period, other celebrated pieces being the "Four Sons of Agnion," "Roland and Ferrabras," and "Ogier le Danois." The Arthurian romances are all founded upon the national and patriotic songs of Wales and Brittany. Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table are the principal heroes, around whom a "beautiful tissue of romantic poetry was woven by the Welsh bards." Of the other romances, the most important is the romance of Richard Cœur de Lion, supposed to have been written in French, but whether the French original is in existence is not known; but an English version, which dates about the reign of Edward I., possesses great interest. The English romance abounds in a variety of wonderful details, which it is supposed were not in the original, but added by the various Norman minstrels. A poem called the "Alexandreis," published in 1184, met with such a success that the metre in which it was composed, a twelve-syllable rhyming couplet, has since been known as the "Alexandrine."

The Norman period gave birth to a series of chronicles in verse for the benefit of the laity, who were unable to understand the Latin Chronicles which circulated from monastery to monastery, for the use of the clergy only. These chronicles were written in verse because but few could read, and the rhyme and jingle of the verses helped

the memory of both the reader and his audience. Among the best of the Norman-French poets is—

Wace, or, as he calls himself, "Maitre" Wace. He was born at Jersey, probably in 1112, and educated at Caen, in Normandy, where he spent nearly all his life. He was a learned man, a clerk, and was made canon of Bayeux on the recommendation of Henry II. He is supposed to have died in England somewhere between the years 1175 and 1185. His chief poems are "Brut de Angleterre," and "Roman de Rou."

Walter Map, born on the Welsh borders, was educated at Paris, and in 1173, when he was about thirty years of age, he was appointed a Justice in Eyre. In 1196 he was archdeacon of Oxford. Map is by far the greatest writer before Chaucer. Before his time the romance poetry had become somewhat conventional; each began with the singing of birds in the month of April or May, and there was but very little life in it. Map, however, in four romances that he wrote, introduced fresh ideas. Though he wrote in Latin, his works were very popular. His poems are written under the name of Bishop Golias, who is at the same time a representative and satirist of clerical vice and irregularity. Most persons were deceived, and thought that Golias was a real personage, and Map obtained the title of the jovial archdeacon.

Josephus Iscanus, a monk of Exeter, wrote a long poem in Latin hexameters, entitled "De Bello Trojano," which seems to have possessed great literary merit. "Though now forgotten, it enjoyed so great a popularity, even as late as the fifteenth century, as to be thumbed by schoolboys in every grammar-school, and ranked by teachers side by side with the genuine poets of Rome."

The "Ormulum," written by one Orme, a quiet country priest, versifies the Gospels, and adds a few homilies. He wrote with the object of bringing the Scriptures down to the simplest understanding. The tone is very devout throughout.

Layamon, in imitation of Wace and the other rhyming chroniclers, produced a poetical history, founded upon the "Brut d'Angleterre." He was a monk of Ernley-upon-Severn, in Worcestershire, and his work extends to about 16,000 long lines of four accents. Both the alliteration and the rhyme is of the commonest description, and both are often failures. The language is extremely Saxon, not more than fifty words of Norman being found in the whole book.

Robert of Gloucester, who is separated by nearly a hundred years from Layamon, follows the same plan and goes over the same ground. He is, however, essentially different from Layamon, in the fact that he is, when divested of his strange spelling, a much more readable author.

"A monk of a great monastery in an important frontier city, his style is that of a man who is fully up to the level of the civilization, and familiar with the literature of his age, while Layamon's bespeaks the simple parish priest, moving among a rustic population, whose barbarous dialect he with a meritorious audacity adapts as best he can to literary purposes." Robert Mannyng, a monk of Boarne, or Brunne, in Lincolnshire, composed a rhyming chronicle in two parts. Thomas the Rhymer, a Scotch romance poet, wrote "Sir Tristram," in writing which he seems to have received some assistance from an unknown man, named Kendal. This romance was hardly known till Sir Walter Scott published it. A number of poems, on religious, devotional, and didactic topics, have come down to us from the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries. Of these Bishop Grossête's "Manual des Péchés," translated by Mannyng, may be mentioned with two short poems, entitled "The Crucifixion," and the "Blessed Virgin under the Rood."

Robert Langland, a fellow of Oriel College, and a secular priest, was the author of an allegorical poem, entitled the "Vision of Piers the Ploughman." Its date has been determined, by incidental allusions, to be

about the year 1362. It is the description of a vision seen in a dream, and extends to about 14,000 short lines. It is a specimen of didactic teaching, and satirizes the abuses of the age in religion and other professions. The vices and immoralities of the ecclesiastics receive the chief attention.

"A crowd of allegorical personages, representing different types of human character, after being brought to repentance by the preaching of Reason, earnestly desire to find out the way to the abode of Truth; their authorized spiritual guides do not know the road;—and it is 'Piers the Ploughman' from whom they at last obtain the guidance which they require. The metre is alliterative, like that of the old Saxon poets. The writer seems to address himself to a class socially inferior to that which Chaucer and Gower sought to please,—a class, therefore, almost purely Saxon, and likely to receive with pleasure a work composed in the old rhythm dear to their forefathers."

The "Vision of Piers the Ploughman" was the star which heralded the brighter sun of Chaucer, and the dawn of that poetic excellence which commenced with him. From that time English poetry was not simply imitation or translation, but a distinct and brilliant creation, which ranked, without unfavourable comparison, with the best poetic literature of other countries that had long had the start.

"The first examples of the Metrical Romance," says Dr. Craik, "were translations from the French. If any such were produced so early as before the close of the twelfth century (of which we have no evidence), they were probably designed for the entertainment of the mere commonalty, to whom alone the French language was unknown. In the thirteenth century were composed the earliest of those we now possess in their original form. In the fourteenth century the English took the place of the French metrical romance in all classes. This was its brightest era. In the fifteenth it was supplanted by another species of poetry,

among the more educated classes, and had also to contend with another rival in the prose romance; but, nevertheless, it still continued to be produced, although in less quantity and of an inferior fabric. It did not altogether cease to be read and written until after the commencement of the sixteenth century. From that time the taste for this earliest form of our poetical literature lay asleep, until after the lapse of 300 years, it was reawakened in this century by Scott."

FIRST PERIOD.

FROM CHAUCER TO THE MIDDLE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

ENGLISH poetic literature may be divided, like the prose literature, into the same periods—

1st. From Chaucer to the middle of the sixteenth century.
2nd. From the introduction of the art of printing to the middle of the seventeenth century.
3rd. That of the Puritans.
4th. The period of the French influence, which commenced with Dryden.
5th. The modern popular influence, which in poetry commenced with Pope.

Chaucer was practically of the same age as Mandeville. The latter has been styled the father of English prose, and the former the "father," the "morning star" of English poetry. With them commenced the stream of literature, which now, like a great river, has flooded whole continents, and has made itself a name and a power. The student of early English poetry must not forget that the influence, the impetus, came from abroad, though the matter and the manner of it is entirely home-bred.

Dante and Petrarch had already kindled a bright flame, and it was at their altar that Chaucer lit his torch. This will account for much that might otherwise be obscure, and explains how both Chaucer and his successor, Gower, came to treat English subjects in a

foreign manner. Foreign influence also ruled the Church and Court, and though in the order of events poetry is older than prose, yet prose was the soonest adapted to the vernacular; neither Chaucer nor those who followed him wrote for the people. Poetry was supposed to be exclusively the language of the Court, and it was not for a long time that it descended to become the vehicle of communication to the people.

JOHN BARBOUR,

1330–1396,

Was born in Aberdeen, and supposed to have studied at the University of Oxford, which he twice visited under the safe conduct of Edward III., accompanied by three scholars whose studies it is conjectured he went to superintend. Some years afterwards he appears to have visited St. Denis, near Paris, in company with six knights, his attendants. The object of their expedition is supposed to have been of a religious kind, for the king granted them permission "to pass through his dominions on their way to St. Denis *and other sacred places*." In 1357 he was made Archdeacon of Aberdeen. In 1379 his name appears in the list of auditors of the Scottish Exchequer, which office he again held in the years 1382 and 1384. Such are all the meagre facts that are known of the life of Barbour.

THE BRUCE, OR THE HISTORY OF ROBERT I., KING OF SCOTLAND.

This poem narrates those events connected with the war of independence, in which the heroic king is the central figure, and it has the merit of combining historical fidelity with the animation and poetical colouring of the romance. The style of Barbour is simple and vigorous, his versification easy, and his descriptions of individual character distinct and discriminating.

It has been conjectured that he was also the composer

of a work called "The Genealogy of King Brut" (or the Brute), founded on the great Middle Age fable which connected the royal races of Britain with an imaginary Brutus, a Prince of Troy.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

1328–1400.

The accounts of the early life of Geoffrey Chaucer are somewhat uncertain. From a statement of his own, he is supposed to have been born in London, and though there is no direct proof of his having been at either Oxford or Cambridge, it is presumed, from a reference to himself in one of his earlier works, as "Philogenet of Cambridge," that he was educated at the latter. It is also said that he studied law at the Inner Temple, on the strength of an entry in an old register of the Inns of Court, in which one "Geoffrey Chaucer was fined two shillings for beating a friar in Fleet Street." By the favour of John of Ghent he obtained the patronage of Edward III. Going with the army to France in 1359, he was taken prisoner at the siege of Reiters. On his release he was rewarded by many marks of royal favour, and would have continued to receive them, but that in Richard's reign he could not avoid taking part against the king, in the dispute between Richard and Lancaster. Forced to flee to the continent, and afterwards sent to the Tower, he continued in great trouble till Lancaster was again in the ascendant, when an equivalent to a few of his lost pensions was given him, and he was made "Clerk of the Works at Westminster." In 1391 he retired to Woodstock, where he wrote "The Canterbury Tales." He died at Westminster, and was buried in the Abbey.

CANTERBURY TALES.
COURT OF LOVE.
TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.
HOUSE OF FAME.
LEGENDE OF GOODE WOMEN.
THE FLOUR AND THE LEFE.
TESTAMENT OF LOVE.

Chaucer's fame rests principally upon "The Canterbury Tales," which are a series of humorous and pathetic stories, related by a company of persons who set out from The Tabard inn, Southwark, on a religious pilgrimage to Canterbury. The general idea of the work was undoubtedly taken from the "Decameron" of Boccaccio, which consists of a hundred tales, narrated, like those of Chaucer, by a company assembled by accident. A full account of the journey is given, with a minute descriptive sketch of each of the company. These sketches display great talent in the distinct characteristics given to each person, and the vivid manner in which they are set before the reader. The tales are partly humorous stories of humble life, partly romantic tales of chivalry, and only a few of them are supposed to have been altogether the invention of the poet.

Chaucer's minor works are either in part or altogether translated from the French, Italian, and Latin. The "Court of Love," and the heavy tragic poem in five books, called "Troilus and Creseide," were the work of his college days. The "Romaunt of the Rose" is an allegory, in which the troubled course of true love is painted in rich descriptive verse. The "House of Fame" depicts a dream, in which the poet is borne by a huge eagle to a temple of beryl, built on a rock of ice, where he sees the Goddess of Fame dispensing her favours from a carbuncle throne. The "Legende of Goode Women" narrates some passages in the lives of Cleopatra, Dido, Ariadne, and other dames of old classic renown. It was written to make amends for the many disparaging reflections which Chaucer had cast in former works on woman's truth and constancy in love,

LAURENCE MINOT.

This author flourished in the reign of Edward III., and has been said to be the earliest writer of English verse who deserves the name of a poet.

HALIDON.
NEVIL'S CROSS.
THE SIEGES OF TOURNAY AND CALAIS.
THE TAKING OF GUISNES.
SIX OTHER POEMS.

All these are descriptive of the martial achievements of the reign, written at the time when they occurred and under the inspiration they caused. They have a fine warlike ring about them, and are polished in style —more so than the verses of any other ballad writer.

JOHN GOWER.

1325–1408.

John Gower is supposed to have studied at Merton College, Oxford, and to have been a lawyer by profession, and a well-educated and well-to-do man. He was contemporary with Chaucer, with whom he was very intimate, and by whom he was called the "Moral Gower." Very little that can be relied upon is known of his personal history; some believe that John Gower, the poet, and Sir John Gower, Judge of the Common Pleas, are the same person; but there is no evidence to prove this. He was blind during the last nine years of his life. At his death he left a good deal of money for prayers, and from his bequests and the love of his writings he seems to have been a pious wealthy man. He is buried at St. Saviour's, Southwark, which he helped to rebuild.

SPECULUM MEDITANTIS.
VOX CLAMANTIS.
CONFESSIO AMANTIS.
BALLADS.

The "Speculum Meditantis," in ten books, was written in French, but has been unfortunately lost. The subject is the chastity of the marriage vow. The "Vox Clamantis," in Latin, arose out of the Wat Tyler Rebellion, and is an effort at dealing with the wrongs of his time. It begins with an allegorical dream, and then proceeds to discuss the various questions which were agitating men's minds, and shows the causes which led to the events in Richard the Third's reign. It is in seven books of Elegiacs.

The third and fourth books of the "Vox Clamantis" sets plainly forth the state of the clergy, against whom all good men were righteously indignant. The discussion begins first with the prelates, speaking against their practices, and hinting at antichrist. Then the fox-hunting clergy, wicked rectors, and the large number of stipendiary clergy without cures, are held up to scorn and ridicule; and finally, in the fourth book, he raises a cry against the cloistered monks and nuns, and the mendicant friars that infested the land.

The fifth book discusses the soldier, and says of bravery, "that if it comes from love to women, or vainglory, it is bad." It then describes the ideal, honourable soldier, and draws a picture of the bad soldier, who becomes little better than a robber. The tradesmen, merchants, and peasants are then described, and from the picture drawn, the former seem to have been shocking cheats and extortioners. In the sixth book the misconduct of the lawyers is described. Gower calls them great rascals, judges and counsel alike receiving bribes to expedite the givers' suits. In conclusion, the king is advised how to live and conduct himself, and is especially warned against gluttony, to which Richard was somewhat inclined, and incited to follow his father. In the seventh and last book the dream of Nebuchadnezzar is applied to the vices of the time, and some moral reflections are drawn. The whole poem is very valuable as a graphic sketch of the times in which the

author lived, and as giving us an insight into his own character.

The "Confessio Amantis" is the work on which his reputation as an English poet rests. The plot, which is rather odd, is as follows. A lover holds a dialogue with his confessor *Genius*, who is a priest of Venus. The priest, before he will grant absolution, probes the heart of his penitent to the core, trying all its weak points. He plies him with moral tales in illustration of his teaching, and gives him lessons in chemistry and the philosophy of Aristotle. After all, when the hero seems to be so arrayed in a panoply of purity and learning as to render his victory a certain thing, he suddenly finds that he is too old to care for the triumph suffered for and wished for so long.

The tales told by the priests are drawn chiefly from the Bible, the Ovid romances, and the "Gesta Romanorum." There is a prologue to the poem, which is in itself a short "Vox Clamantis."

Gower's Ballads were thoroughly Italian in their style and language.

Though Gower wrote against the vices of the day, he had little sympathy with the attempts made by the lower orders to obtain power by violent means. He was a churchman, but with a deep belief in the truth and holiness of religion. He deplored the excesses of the clergy, and the abuses of the Church. Gower's Latin verse is decidedly more pleasant than his English verse, which is wanting in elegance. The Latin poems are also more practical in their character.

The friendship which existed between him and Chaucer seems to have been clouded during the latter portion of their life.

BLIND HARRY.

Of this poet nothing is known, saving that he was born blind, that he wrote the poem for which he

is celebrated, and that he made a living by reciting it before company.

THE ADVENTURES OF SIR WILLIAM WALLACE.

This poem is founded on the traditionary stories told respecting Wallace, and abounds in marvellous stories respecting the prowess of its hero, and in one or two places grossly outrages real history.

ARCHER WYNTOUN.

1350–1430.

A canon regular of St. Andrews, and prior of the monastery of St. Serf's Inch, in Lochleven, a house under the rule of the great priory of St. Andrews. He claims a place in our catalogue of English poets in consequence of having written in tolerable eight-syllable verse, and in very pure language, a poem, at the request of Sir John Wemyss.

ORYGYNAL CHRONYKILL OF SCOTLAND FROM CREATION OF THE WORLD TO THE YEAR 1408.

Notwithstanding its great value, both as almost the oldest Scottish MS. extant, and as the first record of the national history, it remained neglected for nearly four centuries. In 1795, however, a splendid edition of that part which relates more immediately to Scotland was published with notes.

The introductory portion of this famous "Chronykill" is after the manner of all the old chroniclers and historians: the author treats of the creation of angels, etc., and of the general history of the world, before he comes to that which more concerns the subject of his work. It is a clear trustworthy historical record, divided into nine books, and written in eight-syllabled rhymes.

As regards Wyntoun's talents as a poet, though his works in general have little or nothing of the nature of

poetry, yet he now and then throws in some touches of true poetic description. His versification is easy, his language pure, and his style often animated; and as a historian he is highly valuable, when allowance is made for the fabulous legends interwoven with the facts.

THOMAS OCCLEVE.

Born about 1370.

A lawyer by profession, who held a government appointment at the Privy Seal Office. He was a Wycliffite, but seems to have led a somewhat dissipated life. He petitioned the king for money, which does not seem to have been sent to him.

BALLADS.
PRAYER TO THE VIRGIN.
BIOGRAPHIES.

Occleve's verse is not of the highest order. The Ballads are cheerful and lively, but that is all that can be said of them. His chief poem is founded on a Latin work, "De Regimine Principum."

JAMES THE FIRST OF SCOTLAND.

1394–1437.

The romantic life of this royal poet is well known to all students of history. He was the son of Robert the Third, who sent him secretly to France to be away from his enemies, who had just murdered his other son, Rothesay.

The ship, however, was seized off the coast of Norfolk, and the prince, but eleven years of age, carried a prisoner to the English court, where he was kept twenty-one years. His father died broken-hearted for the loss of his darling child. While a prisoner, he lived chiefly at Windsor Castle, and received a befitting

education, and proved himself to be an expert not only in every sport and pastime, but in learning, in music, and the making of poetry. Looking out from the window of the Round Tower one May morning, he saw walking below in the garden the lovely daughter of the Duke of Somerset, with whom he immediately fell in love, and afterwards married. On his obtaining the throne he ruled too well and too justly for the times, which raised enmity in the hearts of intriguers and bad men. He was therefore stabbed to death in the monastery of the Dominicans at Perth, early in the year 1437. The murderers, chief among them Sir Robert Graham, burst late at night into his private room, found him where he had hidden, in a vault below the flooring, and after a fearful struggle cut him almost to pieces with their swords and knives.

KING'S QUHAIR.
CHRISTIS KIRK ON THE GRENE.
PEBLIS TO THE PLAY.

The first of these works was due to the inspiration of his speedily kindled love while a prisoner, the most admired portion being that in which he describes the first glimpse of the lady as she walked in the garden. The title of it is the "King's Quhair," or Quire or Book. It is written in one hundred and ninety-seven stanzas, of seven lines each, in the most polished style, and contains many passages of his life.

The "Christis Kirk on the Grene" is written in the Aberdeenshire dialect, and "Peblis to the Play" in that of Tweeddale. Through both runs a vein of broad comic humour. They describe certain old customs and Scottish merry-makings.

JOHN LYDGATE.

1375–1461.

Monk of the Benedictine Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds, in Suffolk. Little of his life is known. He was

ordained a subdeacon in 1389, a deacon in 1393, and a priest in 1397.

After a short term of study at Oxford he travelled into France and Italy, and returned a complete master of the literature and language of both countries. He opened in his monastery a school for teaching the sons of the nobility versification and composition. Lydgate received a pension for life from King Henry VI., for presenting to that monarch, when he visited St. Edmundsbury, a manuscript life of St. Edmund, the patron saint of the monastery.

STORY OF THEBES.
FALL OF PRINCES.
HISTORY OF TROY.
DANCE OF DEATH.

The first is the story of the tragical destruction of the city of Thebes. The "Fall of Princes" is a poem consisting of nine books, and is an account of the tragedies of all the princes who fell from their estates by the mutability of fortune, and is a translation from Boccaccio, or rather from a French paraphrase of his work. The "History of Troy" was considered the most popular of his works, and is professedly a translation or paraphrase of Guido de Colonna's romance, entitled "Historia Trojana." The "Dance of Death" was founded on a sort of spiritual masquerade, anciently celebrated in churches. No poet seems to have possessed a greater versatility of talents. He moves with equal ease in every style of composition. His hymns and his ballads have the same degree of merit, and whether his theme be the life of saint, hero, or hermit, ludicrous or romantic, historical or allegorical, he writes with facility. His transitions were rapid, from works of the most serious kind to sallies of levity and pieces of popular entertainment.

ROBERT HENRYSON.

1425-1508.

Of his parentage and early history no certain information can be discovered, except that he was a schoolmaster at Dunfermline, and acted as notary-public.

TESTAMENT OF CRESSEID.
THE FABLES OF ÆSOP.
MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.
TALE OF ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE.

The first of these works, usually considered his chief performance, professes to be a continuation of Chaucer's tale of "Troilus and Creseide," and in it is abundance of incident, of imagery, and of painting, without tediousness. One of his fables is the well-known story of the "Town Mouse and Country Mouse," which he treats with much humour and characteristic description. In his minor poems there is great beauty in the versification, and much delicacy in the expression. In strength, and sometimes even in sublimity of painting, in pathos and sweetness, in the variety and beauty of his pictures, in the vein of quiet and playful humour which runs through many of his pieces, and withal fine natural taste, he is altogether excellent. He is remarkable for an easy flowing style, and in his vivid perception of the beauties of nature he is surpassed by none of our older poets.

WILLIAM DUNBAR.

1460–1520.

Born in East Lothian, and allied closely to the noble house of March. In 1475 he went to St. Andrews, where in 1477 he took the degree of B.A., and in 1479 that of M.A. Not much is known of his career for the first twenty years after he left the university. From his own writings we learn that he entered the order

of St. Francis, and was employed for some time as an itinerant or preaching friar, travelling and begging in both England and France. He appears to have entered the king's service, and to have been retained as "clerk" or secretary to some of King James's numerous embassies to foreign courts. In 1500 he obtained from the king a yearly pension of £10, rising at last to £80, after which time he seems to have lived chiefly about court, writing poems, and sustaining himself with hope of preferment in the Church. In 1504 he received a gift for saying mass for the first time in the royal presence. He is supposed to have visited the northern parts of Scotland in 1511, in the train of Queen Margaret. After the ruinous defeat at Flodden, and the confusion consequent on the king's death and a prolonged regency, Dunbar's name disappears altogether.

THISTLE AND THE ROSE.
THE DANCE OF THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS.
THE GOLDEN TERGE.
THE MERLE AND NIGHTINGALE.

The "Thistle and the Rose" is his most famous poem, and was written in honour of the king's marriage; but perhaps the most remarkable is the "Dance," which describes a procession of the seven deadly sins, led by pride, in the infernal regions; and for strength and vividness of painting may stand a comparison with any poem in the language. Each sin is represented by a distinct personification, "painted in horror's darkest hues, and lighted in the dance by the lurid flames through which he leaps."

In "The Golden Terge," the sleeping poet is attacked by Venus and her train. Reason, holding over him a golden shield, repels all his assailants, until blinded by a powder which Presence flings in his eyes. The poor poet then becomes the captive of Lady Beauty, and is much tormented until the scene vanishes with a clap of thunder, and he awakes amid the song of birds and the perfume of bright May flowers.

The poems of Dunbar may be said to be of three classes—allegorical, moral, and comic.

ALEXANDER BARCLAY,

1522,

Lived in the reigns of Henry VII. and his son, and wrote

THE SHIP OF FOOLS,

an allegorical and satirical poem, founded upon the German of Brandt.

STEPHEN HAWES.

Born in Suffolk, and afterwards Groom of the Chamber to Henry VII., wrote

THE PASTIME OF PLEASURE;
THE TEMPLE OF GLASS.

He possessed great skill as a versifier and a thorough knowledge of French and Italian.

GAWIN DOUGLAS,

1475-1522,

Was the third son of Archibald, fifth Earl of Angus. He was educated at Paris for the Church, and rose through a variety of inferior offices to the bishopric of Dunkeld. But for the Pope's refusal to sanction his appointment, he would have become Archbishop of St. Andrews. Political events compelled him to leave Scotland. He went to England, where he received most courteous attention at the court of Henry VIII. It is said he even received a pension from that monarch,

but he did not long enjoy it, being suddenly cut off by the plague.

REMEDY OF LOVE, TRANSLATED FROM OVID.
PALACE OF HONOUR.
KING HART.
VIRGIL'S ÆNEID TRANSLATED INTO SCOTTISH VERSE.

"The Remedy of Love" was his earliest poetic effort, but has unfortunately not been preserved. His "Palace of Honour," written in 1501, was addressed to King James IV. The leading idea of the poem strikingly resembles the "Pilgrim's Progress." "King Hart," the only other long poem he wrote, presents a metaphorical view of human life.

The most remarkable production of this author was the translation of Virgil's "Æneid" into Scottish verse, being the first version of a Latin classic in any British tongue. It is a masterly performance, though in too obsolete a language ever to be popular. Douglas's verse is far from being rhythmical to modern ears; yet the felicitous character of his allegories and the rich beauty of his descriptions are undisputed.

JOHN SKELTON,

1460–1529,

Sometime Rector of Diss, in Norfolk, was educated both at Oxford and Cambridge, and received from each the academical honour of laureate. He was tutor to Prince Henry, afterwards King Henry VIII. His latter days were spent in the sanctuary at Westminster, where he was forced to go to escape from the rage of Cardinal Wolsey at being made the subject of a scurrilous lampoon, and who had ordered him to be arrested and imprisoned for the offence.

PHILIP SPARROW.
THE FUNNING OF ELYNOR RUMMPY.
COLIN CLOUT.
WHY COME YE NOT TO COURT?

"Philip Sparrow" is a poetical lamentation made by a charming young maiden over the loss of a pet bird, slain in a convent of black nuns at Carowe, near Norwich.

The "Funning" was highly popular and full of humour. "Colin Clout" is a general satire on the clergy; and the last on the list, "Why come ye not to Court?" is the lampoon before mentioned as being a virulent attack on Cardinal Wolsey.

His poems consist in a flow of rattling voluble verse, unrestrained satire and jocularity, and a profusion of grotesque imagery mixed up with Latin and slang phrases. At times there are gleams of bright fancy, and snatches of pleasant description. They are well worth reading; the lines are sharp and short, resembling the old Saxon verse.

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SECOND PERIOD.

THE REVIVAL OF LETTERS.

In every country of Europe the fifteenth century seems to have been an age of awakening. The art of printing enabled the cherished works of the masters to be reproduced in such numbers, as to be within the reach of all desirous of having them; and this power of reproduction acted as a powerful stimulus. After Chaucer but little, as we have before shown, was done for one hundred and fifty years; and this decline in England corresponded with the decline in Italian literature also.

"The century which, after the death of Petrarch, had been devoted by the Italians to the study of antiquity, during which literature experienced no advance, and the Italian language seemed to retrograde, was not, however, lost to the powers of imagination. Poetry, on its first revival, had not received sufficient nourishment. The fund of knowledge, of ideas, and of images, which she called to her aid, was too restricted. The three great men of the fourteenth century, whom we first presented to the attention of the reader, had, by the sole force of their genius, attained a degree of erudition, and a sublimity of thought, far beyond the spirit of their age. These qualities were entirely personal; and the rest of the Italian bards, like the Provençal poets, were reduced, by the poverty of their ideas, to have recourse to those

continual attempts at wit, and to that mixture of unintelligible ideas and incoherent images, which render the perusal of them so fatiguing. The whole of the fifteenth century was employed in extending in every direction the knowledge and resources of the friends of the Muses. Antiquity was unveiled to them in all its elevated characters—its severe laws, its energetic virtues, and its beautiful and engaging mythology;—in its subtle and profound philosophy, its overpowering eloquence, and its delightful poetry. Another age was required to knead afresh the clay for the formation of a nobler race. At the close of the century, a divine breath animated the finished statue, and it started into life."

Towards the close of the reign of Henry VIII., the revival which had become so manifest in Italy was felt in England. Surrey and Wyatt travelled in Italy, and brought back to England with them the form and elegance, at the same time the fanciful ornamentation, of the Italian influence. The improvement in grace and style, and the polish which distinguishes their works over those of their predecessors, was unquestionably due to this.

"Having travelled into Italie, and there tasted the sweet and stately measures and style of the Italian poesie, as novises newly crept out of the school of Dante, Ariosto, and Petrarch, they greatly polished our rude and homely manner of vulgar poesie from that it had been before, and for that cause may justly be sayd the first reformers of our English metre and style. Their conceits were lofty, their style stately, their conveyance cleanly, their termes proper, their metre sweet and well-proportioned; in all imitating very naturally and studiously their master, Francis Petrarch."

By them was introduced the form of verse called the "Sonnet," from the Italian "Sonetto," and to Surrey is due the introduction of that form of poetry known as blank verse.

It is in the reign of Edward IV. that the earliest mention of a poet laureate occurs, when one John Kaye

was appointed to the office. So far back as 1251 there was a King's versifier, and the change of title has thus been explained by Mr. Arnold:—

"The solemn crowning of Petrarch on the Capitol, in the year 1341, made a profound sensation through all literary circles in Europe. Chaucer, as we have seen, distinguishes Petrarch as 'the *laureat* poete.' In the next century we find the dignity of *poeta laureatus* forming one of the recognized degrees at our universities, and conferred upon proof being given by the candidate of proficiency in grammar, rhetoric, and versification. It is impossible not to connect this practice of laureation with the world-famous tribute rendered by the Romans to the genius of Petrarch. After the institution of the degree, it is easy to understand that the king would select his poet among the *poetæ laureati*, and that the modest title of *versificator* would be dropped."

SIR THOMAS WYATT.

1503–1541.

Born in Kent, and educated at St. John's, Cambridge, and Christ Church, Oxford. After he had left the university, he travelled on the Continent for some years, returning a highly accomplished scholar and gentleman. He attracted the admiration of all ranks, and particularly of the king, who bestowed on him the order of knighthood, and employed him in various embassies. Like most eminent characters of this reign, he fell under the severe displeasure of the king, and was twice imprisoned, once through a court cabal, and the second time through the jealousy and false accusation of Bonner, Bishop of London, who imputed to him a treasonable correspondence with Cardinal Pole. He was tried before a committee of the council and acquitted, and regained the confidence of the king, who sent him soon after ambassador to the emperor. His eagerness to execute this commission proved fatal. In riding

fast in the heat of summer, he was attacked by malignant fever, of which he died.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Wyatt contributed but little to the refinement of English poetry, and his versification and language are deficient in harmony and perspicuity. From a close study of the Italian poets, his imagination dwells too often on frivolous conceits and contrarieties. As a writer of love addresses, he is stately and pedantic, with very little mixture of feeling or passion; and although detached beauties may be pointed out in a few of his sonnets, his genius was ill adapted to this kind of poetry.

HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY,

1517–1547,

Was the son of Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, and was educated by an eminent scholar named John Clarke. In 1526 he was appointed cup-bearer to Henry VIII.; in 1536 he received the honour of knighthood, and soon afterwards took a conspicuous part in public affairs. Towards the close of 1540, Surrey accompanied the forces to France, when he commenced his military career. In 1542 he was elected Knight of the Garter, and in the same year he accompanied the expedition against the Scots, and was present at the burning of Kelsal, and battle of Flodden Field. In 1544 he was engaged in the French wars, and was appointed marshal, an office of considerable importance, and requiring capacity and courage, and distinguished himself more than once at the siege of Montreal. In 1547 he was suspected of a design to marry the Princess Mary, and by that alliance of approaching to a possibility of wearing the crown. The addition of the escutcheon of Edward the Confessor, which he added to his own arms, although used by the Norfolk family for many years, and justified by the authority of

the Heralds, was a sufficient foundation for an impeachment of high treason, and he was brought to trial at the Guildhall and found guilty; remanded to the Tower, he was beheaded on the 21st of January, 1547, at the early age of thirty.

SONGES AND SONNETTES.
TRANSLATION OF THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES INTO BLANK VERSE.
POEM ON THE DUKE OF RICHMOND.
TRANSLATION OF BOCCACCIO'S EPISTLE TO PINUS.
TRANSLATION OF THIRD AND FOURTH BOOKS OF THE ÆNEID.

His "Songes and Sonnettes" were first collected and printed in London in 1557, and of their popularity we have convincing proofs in the rapidity with which each edition multiplied. In two months they went through no less than four distinct impressions.

For his justness of thought, correctness of style, and purity of expression, Surrey may justly be pronounced the first English classical poet; he is unquestionably the first polite writer of love verses in our language. He took Petrarch for his model, and his sentiments are for the most part natural and unaffected, arising from his own feeling, and expressed with simplicity and elegance.

The use of blank verse was introduced into the English language by Surrey, and the sonnets, taken from the Italian poets, acquired at once an important place in English poetical composition.

"The true merit of Surrey is, that he restored to our poetry a correctness, polish, and general spirit of refinement, such as it had not known since Chaucer's time; and of which, therefore, in the language as now spoken, there was no previous example whatever." In his purification of English verse, he did good service by casting out those clumsy Latin words, with which the lines of even Dunbar are heavily clogged.

SIR DAVID LYNDSAY,

1490-1548,

Was born in Haddingtonshire, and educated at the University of St. Andrews. At the age of fifteen he travelled in Italy, and afterwards was appointed to the office of page and companion to the young King James I., by whom he was knighted in 1532, and invested with the dignity of Lord Lyon King at Arms.

SATIRE ON FREE ESTATES.
HISTORY OF SQUIRE MELDRUM.
THE DREME.
THE COMPLAINT OF THE PAPINGO.
SQUIRE MELDRUM.
THE MONARCHIE.

The "Satire" is his principal work, and bears a close resemblance in structure to the old moral play.

In "The Dreme," the poet is conducted by Remembrance, first to the infernal regions, which he finds peopled with churchmen of every grade, — then to Purgatory,—then through the "three elements," to the seven planets in their successive spheres,—then beyond them, to the empyrean and the celestial abodes. The poetical topography is without doubt borrowed from Dante. He is then transported back to earth, and visits Paradise; whence, by a "very rapid transition," as Warton calls it, he is taken to Scotland, where he meets "Johne the comounweill," who treats him to a long general satire on the corrupt state of that kingdom. After this the poet is in the usual manner brought back to the cave by the sea-side where he fell asleep, and wakes up from his dream. There is prefixed to the poem an exhortation in ten stanzas, addressed to King James V., in which advice and warning are conveyed with unceremonious plainness. The "Monarchie" is an account of the most famous monarchies that have flourished in the world, com-

mencing with the creation of man and ending with the day of judgment. This poem, which is for the most part in the common romance metre, or eight-syllable couplet, runs over with satire and invective. Lyndsay's powerful attacks on the Scottish clergy, the state of which at that time unfortunately afforded but too much ground for them, are said to have hastened the religious war in Scotland.

In "The Complaint" both court and clergy receive the lessons of wisdom from the king's parrot.

The poems of Lyndsay, though practical and controversial rather than imaginative, display great power of description and imagery.

GEORGE GASCOIGNE.

1530–1577.

Born at Walthamstow, in Essex. Studied for the law, but, addicted rather to pleasure than business, he was disinherited by his father, and, joining the army in Holland, was appointed to a regiment by the Prince of Orange. Returning to Lincoln's Inn, he devoted himself to literary pursuits, and accompanying Queen Elizabeth on her progress to Kenilworth, he composed a masque, which he recited for her amusement. In his old age he retrieved his reputation.

THE FRUITS OF WAR.
THE STEELE GLASS.

His works are little known; he wrote well and gracefully, his verses flowing easily; they abound in conceits and fancies after the fashion of the times in which he worte.

THOMAS TUSSER,

1523–1580,

Born in Essex, wrote a poem entitled

FIVE HUNDRED POINTS OF GOOD HUSBANDRY.

It displays a knowledge of agriculture, and pictures pleasantly, in simple verse, the English peasant and country life of the time of its production.

GEORGE BUCHANAN,

1506–1582,

Wrote, in the most polished and elegant Latin, which rivalled that of the best Roman poets, a number of

POEMS;
A HISTORY OF SCOTLAND;
TRANSLATION OF THE PSALMS.

The poems are principally of a "moral, satirical, dramatic, and sentimental character." Buchanan was possessed of the most versatile powers, and his works are characterized by great originality and vigour of thought.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY,

1554–1586,

Was born in Kent, educated at Shrewsbury and at both Universities. In 1572 he went abroad, and when in Paris "narrowlye scaped" being one of the victims at St. Bartholomew. He was one of Queen Elizabeth's most favourite courtiers, and in 1576 was sent by her on an embassy to the court of Vienna. In 1586 he was appointed governor of Flushing, whither he went to take part in the war then being waged between the

Hollanders and Spanish. He received a musket-shot in the thigh at the battle of Zutphen, in Gelderland, and after lingering for some days in great suffering he died at Arnhecia, in the 32nd year of his age. His body was brought to England, and after lying in state was buried at St. Paul's, a general mourning being observed throughout the country. The love and admiration which Sidney won from his contemporaries was a tribute mainly to the singular beauty of his character. His purity and nobility of nature, and the winning courtesies in which its gentle magnanimity expressed itself, took captive all hearts whilst he lived, and have since kept sweet his memory.

SONNETS.

His sonnets are regarded as amongst the best of their kind, and are of rare merit. Sidney is, however, better known as a prose writer than as a poet.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL,

1560–1595,

Was born at St. Faith's, in Norfolk, and educated at the English College of Douay. After remaining for six years in the Jesuit College, he came to England as a missionary. For eight years he laboured quietly and unmolested. At last, however, the heavy penal laws were put in force against him, and he was hanged at Tyburn.

ST. PETER'S COMPLAINT.
MARY MAGDALENE'S TEARS.
SCORN NOT THE LEAST.

The two first of these poems are of some length. They were written while he was in prison, and display the most melancholy sentiments. They have been many times reprinted. Southwell may be said to be the founder of the modern English style of religious poetry.

The little poem "Scorn not the Least" is one of the most charming of his effusions, and is, to a certain extent, representative of the lyrical poetry of the age.

GEORGE TURBERVILLE:

1530–1598.

Born at Whitchurch, in Dorsetshire, educated first at Winchester School, he afterwards became Fellow of New College, Oxford, but left the University without taking a degree, and resided for some time in one of the Inns of Court.

In after life he was appointed secretary to Thomas Randolph, Esq., Queen Elizabeth's ambassador at the Court of Russia.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.
TRANSLATIONS OF OVID'S HEROICAL EPISTLES.
SONNETS, EPITAPHS, ETC.

There is considerable diversity of fancy and sentiment in his pieces. His satirical effusions, if occasionally flat and vulgar, are exceedingly characteristic.

His love sonnets, although seemingly addressed to a real mistress, are full of the borrowed passion of a translator, and the elaborate language of a scholar. It may, however, be added, in his favour, that he seldom transgresses against morals or delicacy.

EDMUND SPENSER.

1553–1598.

Of Spenser's parentage little is known. He was born in London, and educated at Cambridge, where he took his degree of M.A. in 1576. He then became tutor to Sir P. Sidney. After a time he repaired to London, where his rising fame and the friendship of his pupils

obtained for him great patronage, especially of the powerful Earl of Leicester. He was sent on a mission to the court of France. In 1580 he was appointed secretary to Lord Grey, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. In his official capacity, Spenser displayed those talents for business which are sometimes absurdly assumed to be incompatible with a genius for elegant literature. In 1586 his services were acknowledged by a grant of land in the county of Cork. In 1590 Queen Elizabeth created him poet laureate, with a pension of £50 per annum. In 1596 he was made sheriff of Cork, but his prosperity was shortly afterwards terminated by a terrible calamity. After the rebellion of Tyrone, in 1597, his house was set on fire. Spenser, his wife, and two sons made their escape, but his youngest child perished in the flames. This catastrophe broke his heart, and he died the year following at an inn in London.

THE FAERIE QUEEN.
THE SHEPHERD'S CALENDAR.
THE TEARES OF THE MUSES.
RUINES OF TIME.

The "Faerie Queen" is termed by Spenser himself "a continued allegory, or dark conceit," having for its design "to fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline."

"The Ruines of Time" is dedicated to Sidney's sister, the Countess of Pembroke, and is a lament over her brother's untimely death. "The marvellous poetic energy, the perfect finish, the depth of thought, the grace, tenderness, and richness of this poem, make it eminently illustrative of Spenser's genius."

"The Teares of the Muses" is a lament over the fallen state of the public taste, which was leading "nobles to sacrifice true fame to vanity and avarice, and authors to substitute servility and personality for wit." Each Muse bewails in turn the miserable condition of the branch of art over which she is supposed to preside.

Out of the twelve books originally composing, or

which ought to compose, "The Faerie Queen," we have but six in an entire state, containing the "Legends" of the Red Cross Knight, Sir Guyon, Britomartis, a lady knight, Cambel and Triamond, Sir Artegall, and Sir Calidore.

The rest, except a fragment, were lost by a servant on the passage from Ireland to England. Each book is divided into twelve cantos, and the versification of the whole is in a peculiar stanza of nine lines, now commonly called the "Spenserian," and remarkable for its elegance and harmony. Each book is also devoted to the adventures of a particular knight, who personifies a certain virtue, as Holiness, Temperance, Courtesy, &c., and who moves in the midst of a whole host of sentiments and ideas, personified in the same way, the whole bearing the appearance of a chivalrous tale.

In the characters and adventures of these heroic personages, the virtues of holiness, temperance, chastity, friendship, justice, and courtesy are severally illustrated and portrayed. Of the remaining six books, we possess, in two cantos on mutability, a fragment of the Legend on Constancy. Whether any or what other portions of them were ever written, is not certainly known.

A modern critic says of the "Faerie Queen,"—"It is a peculiar world of itself, formed out of the extraordinary fancy of the author. His invention was without limit. Giants and dwarfs, fairies, and knights, and queens, rose up at his call. He drew shape after shape, scene after scene, castle and lake, woods and lawns, monstrous anomalies and beautiful impossibilities, from the unfathomable depths of his mind; yet all of them intended to represent some shade or kind of emotion, passion, or faculty, or the things upon which these are continually operating."

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

1564–1616.

The sonnets of Shakspeare place him properly among the poetic writers. His life and the character of his writing will be found in its place among the dramatists—for such Shakspeare essentially was.

VENUS AND ADONIS.
LUCRECE.
THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM.
A LOVER'S COMPLAINT.
ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOUR SONNETS.

All are characterized by great beauty and the most glowing imagery. It is, however, to be ever regretted that the subjects of such passionate verses prevent them from ever becoming adapted for general reading.

JAMES THE FIRST OF ENGLAND,

When only eighteen years of age, published a volume entitled

THE RULES OF POETRY, WITH ILLUSTRATIVE SPECIMENS,

which show no mean talent in the royal composer.

SIR JOHN DAVIES,

1570–1626,

A poet and statesman of some reputation, was educated at Queen's College, Oxford, where he studied five years. He was called to the bar in 1595, but forfeited his privileges, and was eventually expelled from the Temple on account of certain indiscretions. He began his political career in 1601. In 1603, he was sent by James I. as solicitor-general to Ireland, and almost immediately after he became attorney-

general. He was called to the degree of serjeant-at-law in 1606, and soon after was knighted. In 1613 he was chosen Speaker of the House of Commons.

NOSCE TEIPSUM.
ORCHESTRA.

This poem is on the soul and its immortality and immutability. The "Orchestra," or a poem on Dancing, is a dialogue between Penelope and one of her wooers. It is very fanciful; Penelope is represented as declining to dance with Antinous, who lectures her upon the antiquity and merits of that exercise.

His verse is elegant without being artificial, and flowing without being careless, while its compact structure is remarkable considering the times in which he wrote.

MICHAEL DRAYTON,

1563-1631,

Was born at Hartshill, in Warwickshire. But little is known of the events of his life. He is said to have been educated at Cambridge, and to have been in the army when young. He was poet laureate in 1626.

THE SHEPHERD'S GARLAND.
THE BARON'S WARS.
ENGLAND'S HEROICAL EPISTLES.
POLYOLBION.
NYMPHIDIA.

The "Shepherd's Garland" is his earliest work. "The Baron's Wars" and the "Epistles" display the happy blending of the poetical and historical, which is one of the author's distinguishing characteristics. The latter work consists of twelve pairs of epistles, after the manner of Ovid, supposed to be exchanged between so many pairs of royal or noble lovers: among these are Henry II. and Fair Rosamond, Owen Tudor and Queen Catharine, Surrey and Geraldine, Guilford

Dudley and Lady Jane Grey. The style is "flowing, fiery, and energetic, and *modern*." The "Polyolbion" is Drayton's greatest work, and stands alone, both in style and subject, among other English poetry. It is a poem in thirty parts, which are called songs, in a measure of twelve syllables, and contains a description of the island of Great Britain. It is full of topographical and antiquarian details, "with innumerable allusions to remarkable events and persons, as connected with various localities; yet such is the poetical genius of the author, so happily does he idealize almost every thing he touches on, and so lively is the flow of his verse, that we do not readily tire in perusing this vast mass of information." He seems to have followed the manner of Spenser in his unceasing personifications of natural objects, such as hills, rivers, and woods. The passages from it are now and then met with in country histories and works of an antiquarian character, which surprise the reader with their stately rhythm, their nervous force, and their felicity of diction. It aimed at being a complete topographical dictionary; as a work of utility, however, it fails. As a poem, it is well worthy of the praise bestowed upon it.

"There is probably no poem of this kind in any other language comparable together in extent and excellence to the 'Polyolbion;' nor can any one read a portion of it without admiration for its learned and highly gifted author."

JOHN DONNE,

1573–1631,

Was of Welsh extraction; his parents were Catholics, and he was educated in that faith. He went to Oxford at the age of eleven; from thence he went to Cambridge. Although he greatly distinguished himself at these seats of learning, the faith of his parents prevented him from taking a degree. At the age of seventeen, he entered

Lincoln's Inn to read for the bar, and while so engaged he carefully studied the principal points in dispute between Catholics and Protestants, and finally joined the latter. In 1594 he went abroad, and lived for three years in Spain and Italy. On his return he was made secretary to Lord Ellesmere, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal.

Some years later he was made D.D. by the University of Cambridge, and after accompanying an embassy to the Queen of Bohemia, he was made, on his return, Dean of St. Paul's and Vicar of St. Dunstan's. He died of fever in 1631.

EPITHALAMIA.
METEMPSYCHOSIS; OR, THE PROGRESS OF THE SOUL.
FUNERAL ELEGIES.
DIVINE POEMS.
SONGS AND SONNETS.

Donne is usually considered as the first of a series of poets who, under the name of the metaphysical poets, fill a conspicuous place in English literary history. His fancy was rich and subtle, his wit keen and poignant, and under all the artificiality of his writings there is a vein of true poetic feeling. There is no doubt, however, that the great popularity which he enjoyed in his own day has long since given way before the ruggedness and involved obscurity of his style. If "the painful puns, the far-fetched similes, the extravagant metaphors, which form the substance of the poetry of Donne were taken out, very little would be left."

GEORGE HERBERT,

1593–1632,

Brother of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, the infidel writer, was born in Wales, educated at Westminster and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was elected fellow; and later, promoted to the office of public orator. On the death of James I. he studied divinity, and finally

took holy orders. He was prebendary of Leighton Bromswold in 1626; he died at the early age of thirty-nine, from the effects of a quotidian ague. His life was one of quiet dignified study.

THE TEMPLE.
A PRIEST TO THE TEMPLE.

The first of these works is a collection of sacred poems, the style of which is sententious, antithetical and quaint. The "Church Porch," the first in the book, is unequalled for its didactic pithiness; and the last, entitled "The Church Militant," enunciates the theory that religion always has and always will travel to the westward. It seems that for some time the vice-chancellor of Cambridge refused to license the printing of the work. The "Priest to the Temple" was published in his "Remains," after his death, in 1652.

All Herbert's poetry is characterized by depth and force, but lacks warmth; it is also much disfigured by fantastic conceits. It contains, however, several passages of the purest pious verse that the language possesses. Some of the minor poems in "The Temple" may be given as instances of this, especially that entitled "Sweet Day so Cool."

SIR HENRY WOTTON.

1568–1639.

Born at Boughton Hall, Kent. He became in after life ambassador at Venice and provost of Eton. He was a great friend of Izaak Walton, and was among the first to discover the grand qualities and merit of the poetry of John Milton.

FAREWELL TO THE VANITIES OF THE WORLD.
THE RELIQUIÆ WOTTONIANÆ.

The latter were published in 1651, twelve years after the author's death. Many of the effusions give him a fair claim to be considered one of the poets of the

time. The "Farewell to the World" breathes the ideas of a platonist and the detachment of a hermit from the cares and vanities of the world.

THOMAS CAREW,

1589–1639,

Was born in Gloucestershire of an ancient family, and educated at Oxford. He was attached to the court of Charles I., to whom he acted as server. His life was one of thoughtless gaiety.

CŒLUM BRITANNICUM.
SONGS AND SONNETS.

The first-mentioned work was a masque, written at the request of Charles I. His poetry is chiefly of an amatory character, and full of similitudes and conceits. It does not rise to a very high standard, and has in the past been somewhat over-rated. His style, on the whole, is graceful and flowing. One of the best of his miscellaneous songs is that entitled "He that Loves a Rosy Cheek."

THIRD PERIOD.

PURITAN INFLUENCE.

THE age of Elizabeth saw the rise of a species of poetry which reached its zenith during the period embraced by the Civil War and Restoration. The origin of ballad and lyrical poetry may be traced to the Italian influence of the former period. The sonnet introduced and made popular by Surrey and Wyatt in the preceding period took a firm hold, and has afforded scope for writers ever since; and the Spenserian school was also perpetuated. The period immediately under consideration, however, afforded more lyrical poetry than great poems; and light easy verses, full of conceits and fancies, became the fashion. The gallantry of the cavaliers found in it a ready means of expression; the satirists on both sides used it to utter their most biting invectives; and the Puritan poets made it the vehicle of address to their psalm and hymn singing brethren. The court poets—as such men as Herrick, Lovelace, Waller, and Suckling are called—devoted themselves to the celebration of courtly life, of the beauty of their mistresses, and such other kindred themes as suggested themselves. The writings of each and all are distinguished for their gracefulness and wit, but are often disfigured by licentiousness and impurity.

The Puritan poets were not nearly so numerous. The Puritan writers chiefly devoted themselves to prose;

indeed, some of the best religious poetry of the time came from the pens of Royalists. This, of course, with the exception of Milton, who stands pre-eminent as the one great poet of the period. Milton's poetical influence was not, however, fully felt at the time. Indeed, not one of his poems had the same effect on his times as did one of his prose works. The influence and opinions of the party to which Milton was a most ardent adherent, may be looked upon as embodied in his works. It was a period when a great struggle was taking place between two opposite parties, each with distinct and avowed principles of their own, and with nothing in common. The Puritans required liberty of the press, democratic government, and a toleration of all religions but one. Though in his poems these doctrines, if they are inculcated at all, are done so very indirectly, yet they breathe out the better religious feelings, and deep faith and trust in God, which after all lay at the root of the Puritan character. In such manner, therefore, as Milton has influenced the poetical literature of England, so much has it been influenced by the better feelings of the Puritan influence. The religious earnestness which is the strength of the English character remained vigorous in the heart of the English people; and though the court and fashion of the later period of the Restoration brought with it an influence directly contrary, yet it acted as a leaven, which leavened after a while the whole lump.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING.

1613–1641.

Born at Twickenham; at a very early age he displayed a great aptitude for languages; at eighteen years of age he came into the possession of a great fortune. Afterwards he travelled a good deal, but seems to have affected nothing more than the character of a courtier

and fine gentleman. In his travels he made a campaign under Gustavus Adolphus, and on his return to England he raised a troop of horse for the king's service, entirely at his own charge, and mounted them so completely and richly that they are said to have cost him £12,000. This troop, with Sir John at its head, behaved so ill in the engagement with the Scots upon the English borders in 1639, as to be the occasion of a famous lampoon, which was set to a brisk tune and sung by the Parliamentarians. Detected in a plot to set Strafford free, he fled to France, where he died before 1642, having, it is thought, committed suicide by poison.

BALLAD UPON A WEDDING.
SONGS.

In the quieter hours of his restless life he produced several poetical effusions, which are characterized by great beauty and brilliancy. In the "Ballad upon a Wedding" he makes one rustic describe to another the circumstances and details of a city wedding. He had a happy fancy, a sprightly wit, with a considerable power of description and elegant versification.

WILLIAM CARTWRIGHT.

1611–1643.

This poet, the son of an innkeeper at Cirencester, was educated at Oxford, and entered into holy orders. Being a most zealous Royalist, he was taken prisoner by the Parliamentary forces. Soon after, however, he was made junior proctor of the University, and reader in metaphysics. He died of malignant fever, and so greatly was he liked that the king and court went into mourning for him. He was one of Ben Jonson's "adopted sons of the muses," who thus remarked of him, "My son Cartwright writes like a man." He was

only twenty-six years of age when Jonson died, so he must have begun to write early.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

These poems are mostly short, and addressed to persons with whom he was acquainted. They were exceedingly popular at the time when they were written, but modern criticism can see but little in them. The verses "To a Lady Veiled," "To Chloe," "The Dream," are perhaps the best.

FRANCIS QUARLES,

1592–1644,

Was born in Essex, educated at Cambridge, and became a member of Lincoln's Inn. He was an ardent Royalist, and was for some time cup-bearer to the Queen of Bohemia. He was afterwards secretary to Archbishop Usher in Ireland, and chronologist to the City of London.

DIVINE EMBLEMS.

The poetry of this writer is "partly sentimental, partly fantastic." The obsolete quaintness of his style has caused his works to fall much into neglect. Yet he possessed a truly poetical mind; and in his works is displayed original imagery, striking sentiment, fertility of expression, and happy combinations, together with a compression of style that merits observation.

His principal work was the "Divine Emblems," a set of quaint pictorial designs, referring to moral and religious ideas, of which each are elucidated by a few appropriate verses.

WILLIAM BROWNE,

1590–1645,

Was born at Tavistock, in Devonshire, and studied at the Inner Temple. He spent the greater portion of

his life in the service of two great families—Pembroke and Carnarvon.

BRITANNIA'S PASTORALS.
INNER TEMPLE MASQUE.

The "Pastorals" are a combination of beautiful landscapes and allegory, after the manner of Spenser. They partake more of the character of descriptive poems than pastorals, being deficient in dramatic power. The "Masque" is of a much loftier cast of imagination, and often as a work of poetic art approaches perfection. Though Browne wrote with feeling and simplicity, he is now almost forgotten.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND,

1585–1649,

One of the greatest among the Scottish poets, was the son of Sir John Drummond, one of the gentlemen ushers to King James. After studying civil law for four years in France, he succeeded to and took up his abode at an estate situated near Roslin Castle, called Hawthornden, with which place his name is always coupled. He was visited by all the notables of his day, including Ben Jonson. Drummond was so intense a Royalist that the death of Charles I. is said to have had so great an effect upon him as to hasten him into a premature grave.

FLOWERS OF ZION.
TEARS ON THE DEATH OF MOELIADES.
WANDERING MUSES.
SONNETS AND SHORT PIECES.

The "Tears" was written to mourn the loss of Prince Henry, and the "Wandering Muses, or the Royal River Feasting," is a congratulatory poem to King James, on his revisiting Scotland.

Drummond's poetry possesses much sweetness, and its versification is easy and harmonious. His sonnets are remarkable for their "natural feeling, elevation of sentiment, and grace of expression. Some of his short pieces are coarse and licentious; but the general purity of his language, the harmony of his verse, and the play of fancy, in all his principal productions, are his distinguishing characteristics."

RICHARD CRASHAW.

Died 1650.

The date of this writer's birth is unknown. His father was a preacher at the Temple Church, London, and he was educated at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, of which he afterwards became a fellow. He lived for some years attached to the chantry of St. Mary Peterhouse, and spent his time writing religious poetry and performing devotional offices, "offering," as he says in his preface, "like a primitive saint, more prayers by night than others offer by day." He was ejected from his fellowship for not complying with the parliamentary rules, and having retired to France, he there became a Roman Catholic. Cowley obtained for him the patronage of Henrietta Maria, who secured for him the influence of the Romish Church. He was made secretary to one of the cardinals, and a canon of the church of Loretto. The preaching of Crashaw was of the most powerful and eloquent kind, and he possessed great learning and many accomplishments.

STEPS TO THE TEMPLE.
DELIGHTS OF THE MUSES.
TRANSLATIONS FROM THE ITALIAN.

The "Steps to the Temple" and the "Delights of the Muses" are to be found in a volume of religious poetry which he published about the year 1646. They

are imbued with a fine spirit of religious fervour and enthusiasm, and display rich and elegant fancy and invention. The "Mystical" pervades all Crashaw's poems, and perhaps no poet of his day is richer in "barbaric pearl and gold, the genuine ore of poetry." Metaphors, similes, apostrophes, are plentifully scattered throughout his lines; but amid them all he is never verbose, nor does he ever become tedious or weary the reader. Crashaw's poetical genius shows most in his translations. He was a complete master of versification, and it has been well said that in the translation of "Music's Duel" from the Latin of Strada, "It is seldom that so sweet and luxurious a strain of pure description and sentiment greets us."

PHINEAS AND GILES FLETCHER.

1584–1650.

These were brothers and clergymen; the former, rector of Hilgay, in Norfolk; the latter, rector of Alderton, in Suffolk. They were cousins of the dramatist, John Fletcher.

THE PURPLE ISLAND, AND MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

These are the works of Phineas Fletcher. "The Purple Island" is an elaborate and anatomical description of the body and mind of man. He begins with the veins, arteries, bones and muscles of the human frame, picturing them as hills, dales, streams and rivers; and describing with great minuteness their different meanderings, elevations and appearances. He then describes the mind, of which the intellect is prince. Some of his stanzas have all the easy flow and mellifluous sweetness of Spenser's "Faerie Queen," but others are spoilt by affectation and quaintness, and by the tediousness inseparable from long-protracted allegory. His fancy was most luxuriant.

CHRIST'S VICTORY AND TRIUMPH

Is the work of Giles Fletcher. There is a massive

grandeur and earnestness about this poem which strikes the imagination. It is of a much higher character than the work of his brother. Both these brothers were endowed with eminently poetical minds; but an injudicious taste, and excessive fondness for allegorical personification, prevented their powers from being effectively displayed.

"Both," says Mr. Campbell, "were disciples of Spenser, and with his diction gently modernized, retained much of his melody and luxuriant expression. Giles, inferior as he is to Spenser and Milton, might be figured, in his happiest moments, as a link of connexion in our poetry between these congenial spirits, for he reminds us of both, and evidently gave hints to the latter in a poem on the same subject with 'Paradise Regained.'"

JOHN HALL.

1627–1656.

But little is known of this poet, except that he was born in Durham, and studied some time for the bar. Some of his political writings attracted the notice of the Parliament, and he was sent to Scotland in the suite of Oliver Cromwell: being taken ill, he returned home to die, at the early age of twenty-nine.

HORÆ VACIVÆ—ESSAYS.
TWO VOLUMES OF POEMS.

JOHN CLEVELAND,

1613–1658,

Was born in Leicestershire, where his father was rector of a parish. After completing his studies at Cambridge, he became for some time a college tutor, but when the civil war broke out he joined the Royal forces, and sang the loudest of all the Royalist poets. In 1655 he was seized and placed in confinement, but having petitioned Cromwell to be released, he was

set at liberty, and died three years afterwards, in London.

SATIRES.
ON PHILLIS WALKING BEFORE SUNRISE.

The latter is one of his best poems, but presents a mass of "affected metaphors and fancies," with "morsels of genuine poetry" here and there. His gallantry is of a most fanciful and ridiculous kind. Everything in nature is made to do homage to his lady-love.

RICHARD LOVELACE.

1618–1658.

Born in Kent, and educated at the Charterhouse. He entered as gentleman commoner of Gloucester Hall in 1634. In 1636 he was created—then only at the age of seventeen—Master of Arts. After he left the University he acted as ensign in the Scotch expedition. After the pacification of Berwick, he retired to England, being then on the commission of the peace; he was made choice of by the whole body and county of Kent. at an assize, to deliver the Kentish Petition to the House of Commons, for restoring the King to his rights. For this he was committed to the Gatehouse, at Westminster, but after a few weeks' imprisonment he was restored to liberty, upon bail of £4,000, not to stir out of the lines of communication without a pass from the Speaker. After the rendition of Oxford garrison in 1646, he formed a regiment for the service of the French king; was wounded at Dunkirk in 1648; returning to England, he was again committed.

After the execution of King Charles I. he was set at liberty, and having by that time consumed all his estate, he grew melancholy in disposition, and so poor that he became the object of charity, and lodged

in an obscure and dirty street near Shoe Lane, London, where he died.

LUCASTER.
THE SOLDIER.

"Lucaster" is a collection of all his poems and sonnets, which are emanations not only of the stirring period in which he lived, but of the peculiar circumstances into which he was thrown at different epochs of his life.

The versification of Lovelace is generally rugged and unmusical. Yet he has left behind him one or two things which our greatest poets would not have been ashamed to own.

JAMES SHIRLEY.

1596–1666.

This author, distinguished as a dramatist, also wrote a volume of miscellaneous poems, of which the finest is

DEATH'S FINAL CONQUEST,

which appears in one of his dramas. None of the poems are distinguished by very high poetical genius; they are, however, elegantly written and full of fancy.

SIR RICHARD FANSHAWE,

1607–1666,

Brother of Lord Fanshawe, and an ardent Royalist, who was appointed Secretary of War to Prince Rupert. At the Restoration he was appointed ambassador to Spain, which office he filled till his death.

TRANSLATION OF THE LUSIAD OF CAMOENS.
PASTOR FIDO OF GUARINI.
MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Among the latter will be found some charming specimens of lyrical poetry, displaying great taste and elegance of diction, with a happy imagery. "Lines to a Rose," "A Rub Fool," and a Royalist song are the best.

GEORGE WITHER.

1588–1667.

Born in Hampshire, and educated at Magdalen College, Oxford. After being thrown into prison for the writing of a satirical poem, he sold the paternal estate, raised a troop of horse, and joined the Parliamentary army, in which he attained the rank of major. In 1642 he was made governor of Farnham Castle; but being accused of deserting his post, the governorship was taken from him and bestowed upon Sir William Waller. Being taken prisoner by the Royalists, he was condemned to suffer capital punishment; but his life was spared at the request of Sir John Denham, a brother bard, who declared that he could not be considered the worst poet while Wither was alive. Wither afterwards became one of Cromwell's major-generals, and amassed a considerable fortune out of the sequestrated estates of the Royalists. At the Restoration he was stript of it all, and thrown into prison, because his remonstrances were considered libellous. He was released, however, after some rigorous treatment, and lived some four years after under a bond of good behaviour.

MISTRESS OF PHILARETE.
SHEPHERDS HUNTING.
COLLECTION OF EMBLEMS.
ADDRESS TO POETRY.
POEM ON CHRISTMAS.

The poetry of this writer is imbued with sectarian gloom and bitterness of feeling. The first volume, a collection of poems with the title "The Mistress of

Philarete," was written during his first imprisonment. In the "Poem on Christmas," a lively and truthful picture is drawn of the manners and customs incidental to that period of the year, at the time when it was written. The "Address to Poetry" is, perhaps, the best of his works. It was also written in prison, and is not only "worthy of the theme, but is superior to most of the effusions of the period. The superiority of intellectual pursuits over the gratifications of sense and all the malice of fortune has never been more touchingly or more finely illustrated."

ABRAHAM COWLEY,

1618–1667,

Was the son of a stationer in Cheapside, London, where he was born. He was educated at Westminster School, and at Trinity College, Cambridge, of which he became a fellow. When thirteen years old he published a volume of poems, part of which had been composed when he was only ten. He was attached to the Royalist party, and advocated its principles. In consequence of this he was expelled from this college in 1643. He was also ejected from Oxford for the same reason. In 1646 he followed the Queen Henrietta Maria to Paris, in which city he remained twelve years. In 1658 he returned to England, and falling under the suspicion of Cromwell's government as to the object of his visit, he was imprisoned, but released on bail. He died a disappointed man, as his expectations of reward for his long services in the cause of royalty were bitterly disappointed. He had been promised the Mastership of Savoy, but his claims were neglected. He retired to his country seat at Chertsey, where he spent the last seven years of his life in studious retirement.

He died from the effects of a cold caught by staying too long among his labourers in the hay-field, and was

buried in Westminster Abbey. He left behind him the reputation of being most amiable in disposition, and modest in deportment, preferring solitude to company, professing, says his biographer, "that he went out of the world, as it was man's, into the same world, as it was nature's, and as it was God's."

There was something in Cowley of extraordinary power, both to kindle affection and to disarm malice; never was any man more truly loved by his friends; and this personal charm may explain in part their excessive admiration of his genius.

MISCELLANIES.
ANACREONTICS.
PINDARIC ODES.
THE MISTRESS.
THE DAVIDEIS.
POEM ON PLANTS.

Cowley was rated by his contemporaries as the greatest poet of his day, an opinion which has not been confirmed by modern criticism. He was, perhaps, the greatest poet of the fantastic school, the claims of which have long been set upon one side.

"It will be more easy," says Mr. Arnold, "to assign his proper rank to Cowley, if one remembers that he had a remarkably quick and apprehensive understanding, but a feeble character. One reads a few of his minor pieces, and is struck by the penetrating power of his wit, and dazzled by the daring flights of his imagination; one conceives such a man to be capable of the greatest things. Yet it is not so; a native weakness prevents him from soaring with a sustained flight; the hue of his resolution is ever 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;' or rather his resolution is not of that tried and stable quality at the outset which would enable it to brush away subsequent and conflicting impulses from its path."

Cowley's light and sparkling renderings of Horace and Anacreon are his happiest efforts. Of his writings they alone are now cared for. "The Mistress" is a

collection of love verses. "The Davideis" was begun at Cambridge, with the idea of producing a great epic poem upon a scriptural subject; but no more than four cantos were completed when the design was abandoned, saying in his preface to these four cantos—"I shall be ambitious of no other fruit for this weak and imperfect attempt of mine, but the opening of a way to the courage and industry of some other persons, who may be better able to perform it thoroughly and successfully."

The "Poem on Plants" was the result of the study of medicine which his friends recommended him to pursue on his return to England.

The whole of his compositions "possess great shrewdness, ingenuity, and learning; yet, though they frequently excite admiration, they seldom convey pleasure. The false taste of the age, and a fatal propensity to treat everything abstractly or metaphysically, deform, in his case, the productions of a very able intellect."

SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT.

1605-1668.

The son of a tavern keeper at Oxford, where he was born. He became a most energetic Royalist, and suffered considerably in the many changes of the civil war. He was compelled to flee from England into France. During the protectorate, having taken a passage on board a sailing ship bound for Virginia, he was arrested by the sailors, taken to Cowes, and sent to the Tower. It is said that Milton aided him in obtaining his release, which kindness Davenant is said to have repaid when the Restoration changed their respective positions. Davenant for some years managed a theatre, and was made poet laureate on the death of Ben Jonson.

"Gondibert" is the chief poem associated with his name. It is a tedious heroic poem, without life or character, and was written while an exile in France. His "Miscellaneous Poems" are specimens of that lively, fanciful, elegant, and tender poetry that was so popular at court. His complimentary verses to the Queen Henrietta Maria are unequalled.

SIR JOHN DENHAM.

1615–1668.

Sir John Denham was born in Ireland, his father being at the time Chief Baron of the Irish Exchequer. When a young man he made the acquaintance of some of the dissolute young cavaliers, amongst whom he gambled away the fortune left him by his father. He was engaged in secret services for Charles the First; but being discovered, he had to escape to France. At the Restoration he received, like all the prominent members of the Royalist party, advancement and reward. He rapidly rose in fortune and favour. He was made a Knight of the Bath, and surveyor of the royal buildings.

COOPER'S HILL.

A descriptive poem, suggested by the scenery of the Thames, Windsor forest, and the plains of Runnymede. The versification is characterized by considerable smoothness and ingenuity of rhythm, with here and there a passage of some force and beauty. It holds a conspicuous place among the selections of the present day.

HENRY KING.

1591–1669.

Chaplain to James I., and afterwards Bishop of Chichester, to which office he did honour by his learning, accomplishments, and benevolence.

SIC VITA.
THE DIRGE.

Known best as a religious writer. The above is a specimen of his lighter verse. The first contains the well-known lines commencing, "Like to the falling of a star." The latter is an exquisite poem of six verses, on the existence of man's life.

HENRY VAUGHAN.

Born in Brecknockshire, and educated for a lawyer, which profession he followed for some time, when he took to physic. He wrote

SACRED POETRY,

which possesses considerable merit, and displays a deep feeling of genuine piety. It is nevertheless marked with all the faults and exaggerations of the time.

ROBERT HERRICK,

1591-1674,

The son of a goldsmith, was born in London, and educated at the University of Cambridge. He was a country clergyman, being vicar of Dean Prior, in Devonshire, for twenty years.

He was an intimate friend of Ben Jonson, and after being ejected by the Parliamentarians from his living in Devonshire, he came up to London and published his poems under the title of

HESPERIDES.

His poems are full of that incongruous conjunction of sacred and amatory themes which Donne's works are famous for. Herrick claims a distinguished place among the minor poets, for the dewy freshness of his imagery and the graceful simplicity of his diction. "Gather ye Rosebuds" and "Cherry ripe," well-known popular songs, emanated from his pen.

For all the poetry of his thoughts and the freshness

of his language, the publication of the "Hesperides" was not altogether becoming in one following the profession of a Christian minister. Though scarce a vestige of the nobler feelings that should actuate the true poet is to be found in Herrick, whose verses are the mere poetry of pleasure worship, still some of his verses are replete with tenderness, and moralize in a pleasing strain. As a specimen of his better poems may be mentioned the verses "To Daffodils," in which there is a pathos of the most touching kind.

JOHN MILTON,

1608–1674,

Was born in London. His father, a notary, had him carefully nurtured and educated under a private tutor, till the age of twelve, when he was sent to St. Paul's School, and thence to Christ's College, Cambridge. He took his degree of M.A., but, relinquishing all idea of following divinity or law, he left Cambridge, and went to live with his father in Bucks.

In 1637 he went abroad, visiting the chief Italian cities, and making the acquaintance of Grotius and Galileo. In 1641 he engaged in the controversies of the times. After the execution of Charles I., he was appointed Latin secretary to the Council of State. In his new position, his pen was as terrible as Cromwell's sword. Unceasing study had affected his eyesight, and about 1654 Milton became quite blind. After the Restoration he retired from affairs. He had rendered himself obnoxious to the reigning power, and it is said that he was once in custody of the serjeant-at-arms.

ODE ON THE NATIVITY.
L'ALLEGRO and IL PENSEROSO.
COMUS.
PARADISE LOST.
PARADISE REGAINED.
SAMSON AGONISTES.

The "Ode on the Nativity" has been pronounced by

Hallam to be "perhaps the finest ode in the English language." It is somewhat rugged in diction in many of the stanzas, but, taken on the whole, Mr. Hallam is right.

"Comus" is a masque, founded on the following plot. "A beautiful lady, lost in a wood, is brought under the spells of the magician, Comus. Her fate seems sealed, until a kindly spirit, appearing in guise of a shepherd to her brothers, who are vainly seeking their sister, gives them a root called haemony, by means of which they set at defiance the power of the enchanter. They dash into the palace, interrupt the progress of a delicious banquet, save their sister, and put to flight Comus and his attendant rabble." The masque was acted at Ludlow Castle by the children of the Earl of Bridgewater, then President of Wales.

"L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" are companion pictures, depicting the various lights and shades of mirth and pensiveness.

"Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained" are the greatest works of this gifted author. "Paradise Lost" was originally planned as a mystery; then some idea of treating it as a drama entered the author's mind. The idea was conceived during a journey into Italy. He was blind when he composed it, and it was written by his wife and two daughters from his dictation. He published this poem in 1667, and sold it to a bookseller for five pounds at first, a similar sum when thirteen hundred copies had been sold, and as much for every subsequent edition which should be published. Milton received about fifteen pounds in all, and his widow sold the remainder of the copyright for eight. The common supposition, that the sale of the work was extremely slow, is erroneous. Within two years from the date of publication, thirteen hundred copies had been sold, and the second edition was exhausted before 1678. "The name of Milton was too hateful in Royalist ears to allow of his admirers giving public expression to their feelings under the Stuarts. Addison's papers in the 'Spec-

tator' first made the 'Paradise Lost' known to a large number of readers, and established it as a household book and an English classic." It is in blank verse, and is the first considerable specimen of that kind of poetry, apart from the drama. It is divided into twelve books, and relates, with the greatest dignity of thought and language, the circumstances of the fall of man, not only as far as these can be gathered from the Scriptures, but with the advantage of many fictitious incidents, which in the course of time had sprung up, or which the imagination of the poet supplied.

"Paradise Regained" is a shorter epic, in four books. It describes the temptation and the triumph of our Saviour, and is said to have been preferred by the poet himself to his grander work. It is, however, inferior, both in style and interest, to its predecessor, probably on account of the less poetical nature of the subject. The authorship of so fine a poem would have made Milton a famous poet had he written nothing else.

"Samson Agonistes" is a dramatic poem, after the manner of the old Greek tragedies. It relates the story of Samson's captivity and final revenge upon his oppressors. "It was the last great sun-burst of Milton's splendid poetic genius. Such a theme possessed an irresistible attraction for the mind of an intellectual and imaginative Samson, himself smitten with blindness."

ANDREW MARVELL,

1620–1678,

Milton's friend and Latin secretary, who finds his chief place among the prose writers, wrote

POEMS.

Although there is much that may be called "sorry

writing" in these, there are nevertheless many passages of exquisite beauty. Amongst them may be mentioned "The Nymph's Description of her Fawn."

JOHN CHALKHILL,

1599–1679,

Was the author of a pastoral romance entitled

THEALMA AND CLEARCHUS,

which was published in 1683 by Izaak Walton. Little is known of the author beyond what is on his tomb in Winchester Cathedral. The scene of the pastoral is in Arcadia, and it abounds in romantic descriptions and beautiful language. It is, however, exceedingly tedious, and the plot is obscure.

SAMUEL BUTLER,

1612–1680,

Was the son of a farmer, and was born at Streasham, in Worcestershire. Educated first at the college school of Worcester, on leaving which he proceeded to one of the Universities. After finishing his education, he was appointed clerk to Mr. Jefferys, justice of the peace, and in his leisure hours devoted himself to the study of music and poetry. After the Restoration he was made secretary to the Earl of Carberry, which office he held till 1661, and did good service to the Royalist cause. Notwithstanding, he died in such great poverty that the expenses of his funeral were borne by a friend.

HUDIBRAS.

"Hudibras" was published in 1663, and following years. It is a comic poem in short-lined couplets. The original character is supposed to have been Sir

Samuel Luke, one of Cromwell's commanders, with whom Butler spent a few years of his early life. This poem, which has become so famous, is in substance a satire upon the Puritans, against whom it turned the laugh with great effect. It represents a Republican officer sallying out for the reformation of the state. The character of Sir Hudibras is well drawn, and is said to have done more by its poignant shafts of wit and ridicule, than any of the other means taken by the Royalists.

The weight, compression, and plenteousness of the wit is wonderful. "Butler thinks in witty couplets; argues in them; he spears his foes with a jest; he routs and drives them into oblivion with unextinguishable laughter. His best things have become proverbs. His mass of wit has been grated down into common speech, and particles of it may be found any day glittering in the talk of English ploughmen and artisans."

JOHN WILMOT,

1647–1680,

Earl of Rochester, the wild and profligate minister Charles II., wrote some

SONGS,

deeply and irretrievably tainted with the vices of his nature. Though they are too coarse for circulation in these days, they yet live, through passages to be found here and there.

WENTWORTH DILLON,

1634–1685,

Earl of Roscommon, and nephew of Strafford. He wrote

AN ESSAY ON TRANSLATED VERSE;
TRANSLATION OF HORACE'S ART OF POETRY
MINOR POEMS.

His poetry was said by Pope to be the only unspotted poetry of the days of Charles the Second. It is not characterized by particular brilliancy, either in thought or style.

CHARLES SACKVILLE,

1637–1685,

Earl of Dorset, was rather the patron of literature than a writer. It was through his aid that such men as Butler, Dryden, and Prior were enabled to rise. He held high positions at court, and his verses were only thrown off as occasional recreations. One of them,

TO ALL YOU LADIES NOW ON LAND,

written the night before a battle at sea, will live as long as the Anglo-Saxon element remains.

EDMUND WALLER,

1605–1687,

Was born at Coleshill, Herts, educated at Eton, and afterwards at Cambridge, where at an early age he became a commoner at King's College. He became a politician and poet at the early age of eighteen, when he was made a member of Parliament. At first he took the republican side, but being detected in plotting against the king, he was tried and condemned by the Council of War. He was reprieved from hanging, to which he was sentenced, and after lying in prison a year, was permitted to exile himself to France. After a while he returned to England and celebrated the glory of Cromwell in a poem. Soon after, when Charles II. returned to take the throne, Waller addressed to him a welcome in verse. He was elected M.P. for Hastings, and sat for that place and others in successive Parliaments. At eighty years of

age he represented a Cornish borough: for many years he lived at Beaconsfield, where he died and was buried.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Amongst these poems may be found such well-known ones as "To Flavia," "Go, lovely Rose," "To Chloris." They consist principally of verses of an amatory character, and are written in a smooth and polished style.

From the air of liveliness and ease which pervades all Waller's poems, one would judge they were struck out upon the impulse of occasion; but it was not the case, as he frequently said and wrote things as extemporary which had been the result of much previous reflection.

CHARLES COTTON.

1630–1687.

Born in Derbyshire, where his father, Sir George Cotton, was possessed of the estate of Ashbourne. At the death of his father the estate became his, but it was burdened with heavy encumbrances, which caused him to be always in money difficulties. He was possessed of an easy-going, light-hearted nature.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Most of these are addressed to his friend Izaak Walton, who with Cotton angled in the Dove, a noted trout stream in his native shire. These poems are full of wit, and display a keen appreciation of nature.

WILLIAM CHAMBERLAYNE.

1619–1689.

Born at Shaftesbury, in Dorset, where he practised as a doctor and lived a life of retirement, associating little with the men of his time. He wrote

LOVE'S VICTORY;
PHARONNIDA;

two long poems which Campbell discovered and rescued from obscurity, if not from oblivion. The first is a tragic comedy, and the latter is an heroic poem, containing some charming versification and some fine scenes. They are both smooth and polished in style, and display great poetical power.

FOURTH PERIOD.

FRENCH INFLUENCE.

The French influence, which was brought to bear upon English poetry by the Restoration, materially affected its character. The Revolution had shown that the literature had become a much greater power than it had ever been before; and not only was the stage used most unscrupulously as an engine of political warfare, but the other forms of prose and poetry were also pressed into the service. It is to this, as much as anything, that we owe the introduction, by Dryden, of the rhyming tragedy, a form of poetical literature which was entirely French in its origin. Dryden, the one master poet of the time, was the exponent of the French influence, which completely changed the style of English literature from the quaint, formal, Latinized manner of the Elizabethan era, to the idiomatic, melodious, and well-balanced style of the French. True, the latter was to a large extent cold and lifeless, and marred by an intense affectation; nevertheless, grafted upon the solid literature of England, it improved the structure without affecting its solidity.

The chief characteristics which mark the period of the French influence are a continued use of French words in the place of English, and quotations from French authors; an absence of the more Saxon qualities that had distinguished the literature; an inflated lan-

guage, and a pomposity of expression, which contrasted strongly with the more homely diction that had hitherto prevailed. At the same time, there is a widening in the groove in which the poetry had before run, and a corresponding freedom from restraint, and a refinement given to the mode of construction.

Dryden's efforts in following and promoting the influence of the French models were made principally to secure to himself the affection of the court. Charles the Second's tastes were decidedly of the Gallic school. His long residence in France, while the Commonwealth was in existence, had given him tastes and vices which for some time became paramount on his return to England; and Dryden devoted his powers to the production of such works as would be likely to suit such tastes. The vice, immorality, and licentiousness which marked the age was, therefore, but capable of inspiring the very lowest ideas, and English poetry sank accordingly under the weight of the degradation which it suffered. Says Mr. Reed, "Every pure and noble sentiment, every generous emotion, every lofty thought, became a jest. Now, these are the life of poetry, which in its best forms can breathe only in an atmosphere of purity; and whenever such cannot be found, it is the chief duty of poetry to create it,—to ventilate, as it were, a stagnant and corrupted air. The spirit of poetry—and, let me add, too, the love of it—is a spirit of enthusiasm. Amid the wide-spread corruption, the writings of a few poets and not a few of the clergy show that all hearts were not defiled; and that brazen age was well described by one of its divines, when he said, 'To fight against religion by scoffing is the game the devil seems to be playing in the present age. He hath tryed the power and rage of the mighty and the wit and knowledge of the learned, but these have not succeeded for the destruction of religion; and therefore now he is making an experiment by another sort of enemies, and sets the apes and drollers upon it. And certainly there was never any other age in which sacred

things have been so rudely and impudently assaulted by the profane abuses of jesters and buffoons, who have been the contempt of all wise times, but are the darlings and wits of these.' The severe discipline of Puritan morality once removed, there came quickly in its stead a lawlessness whose pride was its freedom from all restraint. Immorality was a thing men boasted of; they took a party-pride in vice. The civil wars had also demoralized the people, by breaking up the habits and regularity of domestic life. Households were destroyed, and their proprietors found a residence in taverns; and, when the causes of such disordered life had passed away, the low habits it had engendered were left behind. Often, beggared by the wars, the sufferers were driven, in the words of as gallant a cavalier as Lovelace, 'to steep their thirsty grief in wine.' "

It was to please such that Dryden prostituted the powers given him, and his rhyming tragedies are, as far as morality is concerned, of the very lowest character. They failed, however, to attain a hold upon the English stage, and thus failed to exercise any material influence upon dramatic poetry. In the other forms of literature, the French influence was more deeply felt; in non-dramatic poetry particularly so. Happily, the great body of the English people remained untouched by the vices of the court, and soon manifested a desire for better and more moral writings. The next period saw a marked improvement in that respect. The form, however, remained the same, to the ultimate benefit of the literature. The result altogether of the efforts made by Dryden, and followed by the other writers of the day, was a good one,—a greater freedom was obtained in the form of expression, and a more easy and more elegant style; and a style that certainly was more likely to attract readers. This it certainly did, and there is but little doubt that the period of popular influence which commenced soon after was to a large extent owing to the fact of the literature being thus lightened, and made more readable.

The form into which the poetical literature had been moulded by Dryden, was polished and brought to perfection by Pope, the "prince of the Artificial School of English poetry." Pope's influence was perhaps even greater than Dryden's, for the age in which he wrote not only saw a greater number of readers and authors, but saw a greater acknowledgment of the necessity and power of literature as a popular institution. True, the impetus was mainly in the prose literature, the writings of Defoe being the effect, as well as to a great extent the cause, of the change. Long after the change came, however, the poetry retained the form into which it had been moulded by Dryden. True, when Pope appeared, poetry had sunk into a languid and feeble condition; such men as Addison being sufficient to "keep alive the flame, but not give it any additional fervour or brilliancy." After Pope followed a transition period, until the French school was finally superseded, and a new direction given to the public taste, by Cowper and others.

JOHN DRYDEN.

1631–1700.

The son of a Northamptonshire farmer, he received the rudiments of his education at Tichmarsh; from thence was admitted a king's scholar at Westminster School. In 1650 he was elected to a scholarship in Trinity College, Cambridge. After leaving the University he proceeded to London, under the patronage of Sir G. Pickering, a faithful adherent of the Protector's. Inheriting only a small estate of sixty pounds per year, he became an author by profession, turned his attention to the stage, and wrote several plays. In 1670 he was appointed poet laureate on the death of Davenant, and historiographer royal with a salary of £200 a year. He then entered into an engagement with the theatres to supply them with three plays each year.

After the death of Charles II., Dryden changed his religion to the Roman Catholic faith, and at the Revolution he was deprived of his laureateship. For more than forty years Dryden toiled with his pen for bread. The reputation he derived from his writings was great, but the remuneration was little. He was often subject to the pangs of poverty, and suffered considerably from the various changes of fortune which characterized the age in which he lived. Dryden was the admitted chief of his literary contemporaries, and the following extract gives us some glimpse into the inner life of men of letters of his day:—

"Dryden's life was essentially that of a man of letters. He had no taste for field sports, and did not delight in rural solitudes; nor, though he keenly watched the conflicts of parties and the development of political questions, did he ever mix personally in the turmoil of public life. Though not reserved, he was diffident and shy, and was far from cutting that brilliant figure in fashionable society which Pope, though self-educated and a *parvenu*, succeeded in doing. He rose early, spent all the fore part of the day in his own study, reading or writing; then about three o'clock betook himself to Wills's coffee-house, the common resort of a crowd of wits, pamphleteers, poets, and critics. There, seated in his own arm-chair, which was moved near the window in summer and to the fireside in winter, 'glorious John' drank his bottle of port, and ruled the roast, the undoubted chief of the English literary republic."

Dryden died at the age of sixty-nine, and lies buried in Westminster Abbey.

ANNUS MIRABILIS.
ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.
RELIGIO LAICI.
THE HIND AND PANTHER.
TRANSLATION OF VIRGIL.
FABLES.

The "Annus Mirabilis" is a poem upon the year of

the great fire of London. The next, "Absalom and Achitophel," is a marvellous group of satirical portraits, drawn with a masterly hand. They include the leading statesmen and politicians of the Whig party towards the end of the reign of Charles II. The satire was suggested by a plot, matured by the busy brain of Shaftesbury, for placing on the throne at the king's death his natural son, the Duke of Monmouth, to the exclusion of his brother, the Duke of York. The story of Absalom's rebellion supplied a parallel, singularly close in some respects, of which Dryden availed himself to the utmost. Absalom is the Duke of Monmouth, Shaftesbury is Achitophel, his crafty adviser, and Zimri represents Buckingham.

Most of Dryden's poems were upon passing events, and, therefore, it is no wonder that the important matter of his own religious doubts and fears should find expression through his pen. The "Religio Laici" betokens a mind dissatisfied with its own religion, and unable to find amongst many others that which it requires. "The Hind and Panther" was written to defend his change of faith. It is a charming allegory, and "exhibits his new-born affection for the Church of his adoption, which he paints as a 'milk-white hind, immortal and unchanged.' The Church of England is represented by the panther, 'the fairest creature of the spotted kind;' while dissenting sects play their various parts as bears, hares, boars, and other animals. In spite of the grotesque antithesis involved in making wild beasts discuss theology, it affords a splendid specimen of Dryden's chief quality—his power of reasoning in rhyme."

"Alexander's Feast," better known as the "Ode to St. Cecilia's Day," is a favourite work, which cost the author but a fortnight's labour. It is well written, smooth-polished, and displays Dryden's thorough mastery of the English tongue; and no English poem better exemplifies the capabilities of the language than does this one.

The "Translation of Virgil" occupied three years, and brought the poet twelve hundred pounds. It followed some other translations of Latin authors and poems from Horace, Ovid, and Theocritus.

The "Fables" occupied the last two years of the poet's life, for which he received fifty pounds. They rank among his best works, and consist principally of tales from Chaucer and Boccaccio; but it is unfortunate that the licentiousness of the originals is rather displayed than covered up by the change of diction.

With Dryden commenced the series of writers to whom we have alluded as being imbued with the French influence. In spite, however, of Dryden's faults—and they were not few, not the least being his spite and bitterness, which gives an unpleasant feeling to the reader of his works—he is undoubtedly one of the greatest of our English poets. "He was endowed with a vigorous and excursive imagination, and possessed a mastery over language which no subsequent writer has attained. With little tenderness or humour, he had great power of delineating character, wonderful ease, an almost sublime contempt for mean things, and sounding, vehement, varied versification."

"Dryden lived too much amongst the courtiers, and was, moreover, too much of a professional man of letters always to care what he wrote; besides, he was badly paid, and was a spendthrift. But he wrote like a scholar and gentleman; and was full of thought, of force, of ease, and of strength. His verses sparkle and shine and move along with all the majesty and strength of men in chain-armour—weighty and nervous, yet quick and agile. Hardly any man ever said so many good things as Dryden: his lines remain for ever in our memory, and are able to preserve the happy thoughts, because they are so well polished and turned. He has such a command of language, that he can say anything, and cover it with the graces of style; but he seldom rises into the purest regions of poetry, like our modern and ancient poets, like Spenser, Shelley, or Keats.

John Dryden is more of a satirist than a great poet or a great teacher; yet, what he has done he has done so well that it can scarcely be surpassed."

SIR CHARLES SEDLEY.

1639–1701.

A Royalist leader, who took a prominent part in bringing about the Restoration, wrote some

SONGS,

full of the cavalier spirit, and light and sparkling.

JOHN PHILLIPS.

1676–1708.

Son of the Archdeacon of Salop, and educated for the medical profession. He wrote

THE SPLENDID SHILLING,

and other poems of some merit, in the interval of his studies. "The Splendid Shilling" is a parody on and imitation of the style of Milton.

NICHOLAS ROWE.

1673–1718.

Though a poet laureate, Rowe is less known by his poems than by his plays. He was the friend of Addison and Swift, and the favourite of other great men. He is the first editor of Shakspeare of any excellence. He held several lucrative offices.

THOMAS PARNELL.

1679–1718.

Born of English parents in Dublin. Entering the Church, he became, through the influence of his friend

Swift, Archdeacon of Clogher. He resided chiefly in London, but died and was buried in Chester. Habits of intemperance, into which he was led by grief at the death of his wife, hastened his death.

NIGHT PIECE ON DEATH.

This is the work which keeps his name alive among the poets of England. It is a didactic tale, and contains the famous passage which Boswell submitted to Johnson with great solemnity as containing a blunder.

> To clear this doubt, to know the world by sight,
> To find if books *and* swains report it right;
> For yet *by swains alone* the world he knew,
> Whose feet came wandering o'er the nightly dew.

JOSEPH ADDISON

1672–1719.

Inseparably connected with Steele, who with him originated and carried on the "Tatler," Addison is almost forgotten as a poet. His chief writings in this branch of literature were

A TRANSLATION OF PART OF THE FOURTH GEORGIC;
A POETICAL LETTER TO LORD HALIFAX;
SOME VERSES IN HONOUR OF THE KING;
THE CAMPAIGN.

The latter poem was the one that obtained for him the greatest renown. It was written at the request of the Lord Treasurer, and is in praise of Marlborough, then just returned from his great victory at Blenheim.

MATTHEW PRIOR,

1664–1721,

Is supposed to have been the son of a joiner, and to have first seen the light at Wimborne, in Dorsetshire.

He was brought up by an uncle, who kept a tavern at Charing Cross, and was educated at Westminster School. On leaving school, he became assistant to his uncle, and in that capacity was discovered by the Earl of Dorset reading "Horace." The Earl, perceiving his genius, sent him at his own expense to St. John's College, Cambridge, of which he afterwards became a fellow. Prior was presented at court, after leaving Cambridge, by his noble patron; and in 1691 was sent to the Hague, as secretary to the English Plenipotentiaries. He filled the same position in the embassy, on the Treaty of Ryswick, in 1697, and in the subsequent year accompanied the embassy to the court of France, in the same capacity. In 1701 he entered Parliament, and became a zealous politician on the Tory side. In 1711 he was sent to Paris, on a mission to initiate those negotiations which resulted in the Treaty of Utrecht. When his political opponents, in 1714, entered upon their long lease of power, Prior, for his share of the above transaction, was sent to the Tower on a charge of high treason. There he was confined for two years. He died shortly afterwards, and was buried at Westminster Abbey.

ALMA.
HENRY AND EMMA.
SOLOMON.
TOWN MOUSE AND COUNTRY MOUSE.
JACK AND JOAN.

The poem of "Alma" is a philosophical discussion, professedly written in imitation of "Hudibras." It is chiefly remarkable for its liveliness of style. "Henry and Emma" is a paraphrase of the anonymous old ballad, "The Nut-brown Maid." "Solomon" is a moral poem, upon which he bestowed the greatest pains, and which he deemed the finest of his productions. It is of a serious character and well written, abounding in passages of genuine feeling. Prior did better, however, in shorter pieces, such as the "Town and Country Mouse," and "Jack and Joan." The

former was written in conjunction with the Earl of Halifax, and is a parody upon Dryden's "Hind and Panther." "Jack and Joan" is a mock epitaph upon a couple who seem to have passed through life in a quiet if not satisfactory manner. A spirit of gaiety pervades his poetry; his style is fluent and polished; his epigrams are concise and pointed. His fictions and illustrations were mostly derived from ancient mythology.

JOHN GAY.

1688–1732.

Born at Barnstaple, in Devonshire. Although of an ancient family, his father was in reduced circumstances, and Gay was apprenticed to a silk-mercer, in the Strand, London. Disliking his occupation, and with a taste for literature, he was released from his indentures by his master, and took to writing poems. His poetical talents soon attracted the notice of Pope and the literary celebrities of the time, and obtained for him great patronage. He became domestic secretary to Anne, Duchess of Monmouth, and in 1714 accompanied an embassy to Hanover, in the same capacity. In 1726 he went to live with the Duke of Queensbury, and remained with him during the rest of his life, as "a humble friend, and domestic joker." "There," says Thackeray, "he was lapped in cotton, and had his plate of chicken and his saucer of cream, and frisked, and barked, and wheezed, and grew fat, and so ended." He died of inflammatory fever, after an illness of three days, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

TRIVIA; OR, THE ART OF WALKING THE STREETS OF LONDON.
GAY'S FABLES.
THE BEGGAR'S OPERA.
BLACK-EYED SUSAN.
THE SHEPHERD'S WEEK.
THE FAN; in Three Books.

"Gay's Fables" are considered the best of his poetical works, and are written in a lively and natural style. "The Beggar's Opera" is still occasionally represented, but exists, however, mainly in virtue of its songs and music. It was written at Swift's suggestion, that he should write a Newgate pastoral, in which the characters should be thieves and highwaymen. It was produced in 1727, and was so much admired for its music, and ridicule which it threw on the weak points of many human institutions, that it was acted sixty-three nights in succession, and has ever since continued to be a favourite with theatre-goers. Gay wrote many satirical ballads, holding up to ridicule and scorn both persons and events. There was nothing bitter or spiteful in his satire, however. His ballad of "Black-Eyed Susan" possesses the strongest vitality of all that he has done, and thrills now and then our theatres and concert rooms. Gay had a happy lyrical vein, and could turn a stanza on the beauty of woman, and the fascinations of the wine-cup, and the fleeting of youth, with considerable grace. The "Shepherd's Week" contains much humour and many entertaining pictures of rural life in its true character of rudeness. It was written at Pope's suggestion, and to rival some verses of Phillips, who had offended Pope.

THOMAS TICKELL.

1686–1740.

Tickell was born near Carlisle. He was sometime secretary to Addison, and acted in the same capacity to the Lords Justices in Ireland. He it was who undertook that translation of the "Iliad" which roused Pope's ire against Addison.

COLIN AND LUCY.
KENSINGTON GARDENS.

The ballad of "Colin and Lucy" is still a popular one, and is remarkable for its simplicity, elegance, and

tenderness. "Kensington Gardens" is an allegorical poem, in which the fairies play the principal part, and are represented as building a fairy palace, and laying out the adjacent woods. It contains many poetical passages, and fixes many pretty conceits about well-known spots in the popular resort.

WILLIAM SOMERVILLE,

1692–1742,

A country gentleman of Warwickshire, wrote a poem entitled

THE CHASE,

in which all the incidents and circumstances attendant upon the sport are minutely and vividly described. There are some very animated passages, which rise into poetry of the highest order.

RICHARD SAVAGE.

1697–1743.

Born in London, the illegitimate child of noble parents. The circumstances of his life form a most miserable picture; he sank lower and lower each year through debauchery and vice. While confined in Bristol gaol, a prisoner for debt, he was found dead in his bed.

THE WANDERER

is his principal production, and was written during a brief time of prosperity, while he was enjoying the hospitality and favour of Lord Tyrconnel.

FIFTH PERIOD.

With Defoe prose literature made a start forward and attained a position that it had never attained before. Though the latest cultivated, it now took the foremost place. The earliest literature assumes naturally the form of poetry, and in England especially was this the case; long after poetry had been cultivated there was but a vernacular prose. Romance found a medium in poetry as well as philosophy, and with so long a start and so powerful a position, it is no wonder that for some time prose writing failed to attain anything like an equal recognition with poetry. Nor would it, had not the writers who inaugurated the present period of popular influence made prose the perfect and exclusive medium for the delineation of events of real life. The characters and incidents that occurred under daily observation found more natural expression in prose. The conversation between characters drawn from every-day life assumed an appearance of reality when set down in prose. To this, therefore, and to the brilliant talents of such writers as Defoe, Richardson, Smollett, Goldsmith, may be attributed the fact that poetry at the end of the seventeenth century had sunk into a somewhat feeble condition. The prose, virtually, for the time overshadowed it. Alexander Pope may be said to have revived the poetic flame. He did more than that, however; he brought to perfection the classic style into which the form of English poetry had been moulded by Dryden, and gave a tone to our poetical literature which is recognized and acknowledged at the present

time. Pope's writings are perhaps more quoted than those of any other writer.

With all the faults which characterized the school of poetry introduced by Dryden, it yet possessed a certain vigour and sense which redeemed it from the obscurity into which it would otherwise have fallen. It was powerful enough to bear these defects without being affected by them, and to Pope must be given the praise for having polished to the extreme the few graces it possessed. This extreme almost reached the point of effeminacy in its mechanical perfection, and the versifiers that followed him caught with avidity the "trick of melody and the neat antithetical opposition of thought." This did not, however, last long. So soon as the brilliant lamp of Pope ceased to shed its all-powerful light, the immediate influence of his peculiar style became less, and a gradual change took place in popular taste and sentiment. The "cold and clear-cut artificial spirit of that classicism" which Pope exhibited, gave way to the tendency to seek for fitting forms of expression and more natural subjects amongst the emotions and thoughts of life.

This tendency "may be in some measure ascribed to the weariness inspired by the eternal repetition of the neat and epigrammatic ingenuity which had gradually become a mere far-off echo of Pope. Under the influence of this weariness, poets began to seek for materials in a more direct and picturesque reproduction of nature, and endeavoured to give freshness to their diction by rebaptizing it in the deep and sparkling fountains of our older literature."

In the writings of Cowper may be traced more particularly the progress of such tendency. They are full of the real sympathies which spring from human nature; the domestic affections, the convictions of religion, and the various events and connections of social life, formed the themes of his writings. In Crabbe, again, we find a further exemplification of the tendency. The passions and emotions of humble life,

of the labourer and villager, supply themes for his poetic genius to work upon.

It must not, however, be forgotten that a further revolution took place, inaugurated by Bishop Percy, who was strongly impressed with the vast stores of the beautiful though rude poetry which lay buried in obscure collections of ballads and legendary compositions, and he devoted himself to the task of explaining and popularizing the then neglected beauties of these old rhapsodists with the ardour of an antiquary and with the taste of a true poet.

In Sir Walter Scott this influence found its most talented exponent. His "Border Minstrelsy" contains a large number of the old romance stories taken from the "Gesta Romanorum" and other sources. These he recast according to his own poetic fancy, preserving as far as possible the characteristics of the mediæval fragments, but not hesitating, where a blank either in time or story occurred, to fill it up according to his own imagination. Thus at the commencement of the nineteenth century we find that two influences were at work upon English poets and English poetry, and the influences are being felt now. First, perfection in the art of writing and in mere versification. To this the efforts of Dryden and Pope largely, if not exclusively, contributed. Secondly, the bringing of poetic art to bear upon romantic subjects instead of mere classical ones. And from this we get the characteristics of the writing of our later and living poets—clever writing, as far as mere versemaking is concerned, with burning, breathing thoughts and words. The poetry of the present day is essentially the poetry of the emotions, the passions, the hopes and fears of human beings, and the scenes are drawn not from the classic regions peopled by gods and goddesses, shepherds and shepherdesses, but from the world in which we live. This gives it a far higher interest; and though the age has produced no poet of the calibre of a Milton, no clever elegant versifier like Pope, we can boast of poets whose words find an

echo and response in the hearts of millions, because of the intense humanity displayed in their strains. These are not wanting in elegance either, for we can boast of some of the most graceful writers that ever wielded the poet's quill.

The taste for poetry has also increased in a like ratio. It is no longer the luxury of the few, it is the pleasure of the many. It is to be remembered that from the time of Chaucer even to that of Pope, poetry was chiefly addressed to the court and the higher classes; the lower and less educated cared but little for it; and no wonder, seeing that it soared far above their understandings. When, however, the genius and spirit of poetry stooped to homely subjects, and touched with magic wand the circumstances of every-day life, then there awoke in the hearts of the people a response which in its turn awoke the slumbering talents of many a poet of the affections. Thus the action and reaction went on; the taste for poetry every day increased, and daily did homely yet graceful lyrics, breathing the purest sentiment, spring from the hearts of poets. We find, also, that this popular appetite for poetry, thus awakened, was not entirely satisfied with the comparatively humble fare set before it. The higher poets became eagerly sought after, and Milton had more readers than he ever had before. The popular taste for poetry had been raised to the standard.

Thus popular influence has, since it obtained recognition, directed and encouraged poetic literature. The likes and dislikes of the court no longer trammel the aspirations of genius; the greater body of the public are appealed to; and varied as its tastes may be, numerous as are the sections it may be divided into, each with its own peculiar notions and fancies, no writer with strength of character, honesty of purpose, and vigour of thought and fancy, has yet appealed to it in vain—unless, indeed, the higher and nobler sentiments engendered by religion and morality have been found wanting.

ALEXANDER POPE,

1688-1744,

Was the son of a linendraper in Lombard Street, London, where he was born. He was reared at a sequestered villa in Windsor Forest, to which his father had retired with a competence. From his earliest infancy he was of a weak and delicate frame of body, and, though he lived somewhat beyond the middle period of life, he never enjoyed good or vigorous health: he was deformed in person and even hunch-backed, and on this account was an object of tender solicitude to his mother, for whom he entertained throughout life the greatest affection. Belonging, as he did, to a Catholic family, who were also stanch adherents of the Stuarts, he was placed when eight years old under the tuition of the family priest; later, he was sent to a Catholic seminary at Twyford, and soon after the age of twelve he quitted school and went to reside with his father at Binfield. He never was a profound or accurate scholar, but he read the Latin poets with ease, and had some considerable knowledge of French, Italian, and Greek. When sixteen, he went to London, where he became acquainted with Congreve, Wycherley, Swift, and Addison, who took him under his protection. At a subsequent period Pope mixed a great deal with the fashionable society of the day, which exercised a considerable influence on his after life and the character of his writings. With the money he made by his translation of Homer, Pope bought a villa at Twickenham, and five acres of land. Here "the hours which were not given to his desk were spent in laying out his flower-beds, and adorning his famous grotto with such things as red spar, Cornwall diamonds, Spanish silver, and lava from Vesuvius. Here, by the gentle Thames, his later years were spent; here Swift, Bolingbroke, Gay, Arbuthnot, and a host of the most brilliant men of the day, paid him frequent visits; and it is, at least, one tender trait in the character of a poet

who has not had very many kind sayings lavished on him, that here his old mother found a warm welcome and a well-cushioned chair in her declining days." At Twickenham were spent his last days: worn down with a complication of diseases; so feeble in body as to have to be sewn into stays every morning in order to stand alone and erect; requiring three pairs of stockings to make his shrunken legs at all sightly; with his bald head covered with a black velvet cap; afflicted besides with asthma; but with mind unimpaired, and able to the last to "spin out webs of verse, brilliant and deadly;" the poet breathed his last at the early age of fifty-six. In disposition Pope was exceedingly irritable, and, as a writer, exceedingly captious of criticism and jealous of every other writer, no matter how insignificant they might be. Notwithstanding the high position he attained, he weakly descended to the meanness of writing burlesque and satirical poems in order to cast ridicule upon those authors who possessed less ability than himself. These attacks, of course, produced retaliation, and his life and sensitive nature were greatly embittered by them. He can be forgiven much when it is remembered that his life was, as he himself said, "one long disease." He was easily offended with the merest trifles, and never forgot or forgave them. His literary stratagems, disguises, assertions, denials, and misrepresentations would fill volumes. Yet, when no disturbing jealousy, vanity, or rivalry intervened, he was generous and affectionate, and displayed a manly independent spirit.

ODE TO SOLITUDE.
PASTORALS.
WINDSOR FOREST.
ESSAY ON CRITICISM.
RAPE OF THE LOCK.
ELEGY ON AN UNFORTUNATE LADY.
EPISTLE FROM ELOISA TO ABELARD.
TRANSLATION OF THE ILIAD.
THE DUNCIAD.
ESSAY ON MAN.
MORAL ESSAYS.

Pope's first work, the "Ode to Solitude," was written when only eight years of age; at sixteen he wrote the "Pastorals" and the beginning of the "Windsor Forest," which, when published a few years after, obtained for him great reputation. At twenty-one he wrote the "Essay on Criticism," which is allowed to be, perhaps, "the finest piece of reasoning poetry" that has ever been written. "Of this poem it may be said that it at once describes, and is a very fair specimen of, what the wits of Queen Anne's reign were most captivated by—an epigrammatic turn of thought, and a happy appropriateness of expression." It excited at the time of its appearance almost an universal admiration for its comprehensiveness of thought, the justness of the remarks, and the happiness of illustration which were then attributed to it. Its merits, however, are somewhat more moderately estimated at the present time.

The "Rape of the Lock" is a "heroical, comical" poem in five cantos, and was suggested by the following circumstance:—Lord Petre had stolen a lock of hair from his affianced bride, Miss Arabella Fermor, which caused a quarrel between the families, and Pope's object was to laugh them together again, and heal up the breach which had been occasioned. It failed to effect its object, but it made the reputation of the poet. In its original form the incident was described with much greater beauty than in the elaborated poem which afterwards appeared. A number of supernatural beings were introduced, consisting of good and evil genii, who are supposed to direct the doings of the human characters. It contains more fancy and humour than any other of Pope's works.

The heroine of the "Elegy," whose name has not been ascertained, is said to have destroyed herself in France, in consequence of her affections being blighted by the tyranny of an uncle. This work and the "Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard" are the poems which alone display deep feeling and passionate writing.

Pope was just twenty-four years of age when he commenced the most extensive and the most profitable of all his works, the translation of the "Iliad." It was begun in 1712, and finished in 1720. The "Odyssey" took him about five years more, in which he was helped considerably by his two friends, Elijah Fenton and William Browne. The two translations realized a considerable sum, of which Pope, after paying all expenses, pocketed about £8,000. The translation can scarcely be said to be a faithful version. It lacks the simple majesty of the great original. "Like Dryden, in translating Virgil, Pope did little more than reproduce the sense of Homer's verse in smooth and neatly balanced English couplets, leaving the spirit behind in the glorious rough old Greek, that tumbles on the ear like the roar of a winter sea." It does, nevertheless, abound in passages which show off the translator's best qualities—"terseness, brilliancy, and ingenuity."

The "Dunciad," or epic of Dunces, was first published in 1728, and completed in 1742, by the addition of a fourth book. It is directed against the literary profession, and writers of the time, including Colley Cibber, the poet laureate, and Bentley. It is a specimen of the power Pope possessed of satirical writing. It contains many passages of the most bitter sarcasm.

The "Essay on Man," the result of Pope's acquaintance with Lord Bolingbroke, the libertine and sceptic, whose immoral views are reflected in it, is a specimen of his great power of versification. Pope's qualities as a poet may be summed up thus. As a poet he was deficient in originality and creative power, but as a literary artist, satirist, and moralizer in verse he is unrivalled, and in style "the English Horace."

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JONATHAN SWIFT.

1667–1745.

Swift takes a prominent position among the prose writers; he, nevertheless, wrote some verses and short poems, some of which find admirers at the present time, though they were principally on passing events.

MORNING.
THE CITY SHOWER.
RHAPSODY ON POETRY.
VERSES ON MY OWN DEATH.

These are all coarse, graphic, and mostly satirical.

ROBERT BLAIR.

1699–1746.

Born in Edinburgh, was educated for the Church, and ordained minister of Athelstaneford, Beddingtonshire, in 1731, where he lived till his death. He was an accomplished and thoughtful man, and devoted to science, which a private fortune enabled him to pursue.

THE GRAVE,

a poem written in blank verse, which attained an honourable place in the esteem of those capable of appreciating a masculine though somewhat gloomy force of thought and imagery, applied to a profoundly suggestive and serious theme.

ISAAC WATTS.

1674–1748.

Born at Southampton. At twenty-four years of age he became the assistant minister of an Independent congregation at Stoke Newington. Want of health, however, compelled him to resign his position, and he

found a home in the house of Sir Thomas Abney, one of his warmest friends and supporters.

PSALMS, HYMNS, AND DIVINE SONGS.

These hymns, which have long taken a high place among such literature, are known to almost every one. They are simple, yet beautiful, and well suited for the purpose for which they were written, namely, the worship of praise.

JAMES THOMSON.

1700-1748.

Born at Ednam, in Roxburghshire, and educated first at the grammar-school of Jedburgh, and then at the University of Edinburgh, which he entered with the intention of studying for the Church. Discouraged by an unfavourable professional criticism of one of his exercises—the paraphrase of a psalm in brilliantly figurative language, which he was told was unsuitable for the pulpit—Thomson resolved to devote himself entirely to poetry, and repaired to London as the most promising field for the exercise of his talents. In 1731 he set out to travel through France, Switzerland, and Italy, with the son of Lord Chancellor Talbot. On his return his patron obtained for him a lucrative appointment in Chancery, which he lost at the death of the Chancellor. He subsequently obtained a pension of £100 per annum from the Prince of Wales, and was appointed besides to the office of Surveyor General of the Leeward Islands, from which he drew about £300 a year. He lived latterly in a pretty cottage at Richmond, and though slothful in the extreme, was a very amiable and benevolent man. He died of a cold caught while sailing upon the Thames.

THE SEASONS.
LIBERTY.
THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

The first of "The Seasons," "Winter," was written when, without money or friends, he first walked London

streets. He received for it the large sum of three guineas. It quickly attracted notice, however, and attained such success as justified the production of the rest. The first edition was speedily run through, and each succeeding one received such correction at the hand of the author, that the third became almost a new work. Many passages in this beautiful and well-known poem display glorious pictures of natural scenery. It is eminently original both in style and matter. It is written in blank verse, and, as the title betokens, it describes the various appearances of the year as the months roll by.

"Liberty" is a long poem, which, while it contains some fine passages, never became popular.

"The Castle of Indolence," designed as a kind of satire on his own soft and lethargic character, is nevertheless the most perfect, and perhaps the most poetical of all his compositions. It is in the form of an allegory, and is written in Spenserian stanzas. The dwellers in the enchanted castle are all steeped in drowsy luxury by a magician's spell, which is broken by a knight named Industry. The moral of the tale is, however, lost in the delicious life of indolence pictured so invitingly, and in lines which roll in "dreamy music on the ear, soothing with a soft and sleepy charm."

Thomson was possessed of a true poetical, but not an imaginative, genius: he had the power of viewing everything in a poetical light. His chief fault is such a cloud of words that sometimes the sense can hardly peep through: he is remarkable, however, for purity of diction and wonderful harmony of rhythm.

AMBROSE PHILLIPS.

1675-1749.

Born in Shropshire, and educated at St. John's College, Cambridge. He incurred the enmity of Pope,

who bitterly satirized him, and got Gay to do so as well. He also obtained for himself the nickname of Namby-Pamby, on account of the complimentary verses he was fond of addressing to his friends and their babies.

PASTORALS.

These, though highly praised in his own day, have not succeeded in obtaining a hold upon successive generations; they are, probably, scarcely now read, though they possess some merits, and picture rustic scenes with some delicacy and appreciation.

WILLIAM COLLINS,

1720–1756,

Was born at Chichester, of humble parentage, and was educated at Winchester and Oxford. At an early age he went to London, but, like many brother poets, his literary exertions were insufficient to preserve him from penury and debt. He was subject to fits of mental depression, which terminated in insanity, and he died in a lunatic asylum in the thirty-sixth year of his age. For some time before his death, he might have been seen wandering among the aisles of Chichester Cathedral, accompanying the music with his sobs and his moans.

ODE ON THE PASSIONS.
ODE TO EVENING.
ODE ON HIGHLAND SUPERSTITIONS.
DIRGE IN CYMBELINE.

"The Passions" is undoubtedly one of the finest odes in the language. The personification of the Passions is true and striking, and the variation of the measure is well adapted to the various emotions to be expressed. Collins was possessed of a rich imagination, but his writings are deficient in pathos. The composition is most finished and harmonious.

ALLAN RAMSAY,

1686–1758,

Was born at Leadhills, a village in Lanarkshire. He commenced life as a wig-maker in the city of Edinburgh, where he afterwards became a bookseller, and established the first circulating library in Scotland. He lived during the latter period of his life at a small quaint house called Ramsay Lodge, and situated on the Castle Hill.

THE GENTLE SHEPHERD.
THE YELLOW-HAIRED LADDIE.
LOCHABER NO MORE.

The pastoral drama of "The Gentle Shepherd" is the work on which his reputation chiefly rests. It was first published in 1725, and is written in the north country dialect. The drama presents the rustic characters in their every-day life, and makes them talk in their own language. It contains much natural writing and feeling, and many descriptive passages of great beauty and fine poetic tenderness. It is without doubt the finest existing drama of its kind. The songs that he wrote prove that he was skilful in the art of ballad writing. He collected the popular songs of his native country, and published them. Two of his best lyrics are mentioned above; they are especially dear to the Scottish heart.

JOHN DYER.

1700–1758.

Born in Caermarthenshire, and educated at Westminster School. He was intended for the law, but abandoned that study for painting. He travelled in Italy, and on returning home in bad health, took orders, and obtained some ecclesiastical preferment.

GRONGAR HILL.
THE FLEECE.
THE RUINS OF ROME.

The first is remarkable for simplicity, warmth of feeling, and exquisite descriptions of nature. "The Fleece" is a didactic poem, and "The Ruins" is a poem abounding in isolated beauties.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE.

1714–1763.

Born at Leasowes, in Shropshire, educated at the grammar-school at Hales-Owen, and at Pembroke College, Oxford. He never took up any profession, but lived on his own estate with his tenants, who were distantly related to him. He spent his estate in adorning it, and his death was hastened by his anxieties.

THE SCHOOLMISTRESS.
PASTORAL BALLAD.

His poetical works are particularly distinguished by elegance and simplicity. "The Schoolmistress" is a descriptive sketch, after the manner of Spenser. The "Pastoral Ballad" is one of the finest poems of that kind to be found in the English language. It is written with great smoothness of diction, and displays much tenderness.

CHARLES CHURCHILL.

1731–1764.

Born at Westminster, educated at Westminster School. He was ordained in 1756, and two years afterwards was curate of St. John's, Westminster. While in that position he fell into habits ill becoming his clerical character, and neglected the duties of his office. He was a constant attendant at theatres, and led a most dissolute life. His parishioners were scandalized, and the dean remonstrated; whereupon, to show his utter contempt of the ministerial profession, he appeared in church in a blue coat and gold-laced hat. He was compelled to resign his curacy, the pecuniary sacrifice

being little, as his works brought him in considerable sums. He died at Boulogne whilst on a visit to Wilkes, his boon companion.

THE ROSCIAD.
THE APOLOGY.
THE PROPHECY OF FAMINE.
A SCOTS PASTORAL.

The first is a satire on theatrical managers and performers, displaying much critical acumen, clever sarcasm, and humour. The object of it was to hold up to ridicule the defects of the principal London actors, as well as the characters of a number of gentlemen who interested themselves in theatrical affairs. "The Apology" is a bitter satire on some of his critics, which added alike to his purse and his notoriety. "The Scots Pastoral" is one of the best of his satires.

Churchill was a man of "coarse feelings and low habits; but his powers as a satirist were so very great, that, if he had exerted them on subjects of general and permanent interest, his writings could hardly have failed to secure a lasting reputation."

EDWARD YOUNG,

1681–1765,

Was born at Upham, where his father was rector. He was educated at Winchester and Oxford; at the latter he obtained the degree of doctor of laws in 1719. Taking holy orders, he was presented with the living of Welwyn, in Herts, having previously been appointed chaplain to George II.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.
UNIVERSAL PASSION.

The first-mentioned is the poem to which he chiefly owes his fame, and is as pre-eminently original as it is unquestionably a work of great poetical genius. Dealing with the most momentous subjects that can occupy the

human imagination, Life, Death, and Immortality, it will always exercise for serious readers a power entirely independent of its literary merit; but no reader can fail to be struck by the knowledge of life and character, the striking imagery, the variety of illustration, and the occasional bursts of fancy and sublimity with which the poet expresses and embellishes his theme. On the other hand, a gloomy tone pervades the poem, and it gives a "distempered view of human life."

MICHAEL BRUCE,

1746–1767,

A schoolmaster, born at Portmoak, Kinross, wrote

ELEGY ON SPRING;
LOCHLEVEN.

Both of these poems display great genius and poetic vigour. In the former he most pathetically laments and describes his almost certain premature dissolution.

MARK AKENSIDE,

1721–1770,

Was the son of a butcher at Newcastle-on-Tyne; he was educated for the medical profession, and took his degree of M.D. at Leyden. He practised as a physician first at Northampton, and afterwards in London. His chief support was, however, derived from the liberality and kindness of a friend. He died suddenly of putrid sore throat. He was an exceedingly vain and irritable man.

PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

This poem was published when the author was but twenty-three years old; it is full of "fine imagery,

expressed in rich, musical language." It possesses great vigour and power, and is in advance of the age in the poetical genius which it displays.

CHRISTOPHER SMART.

1722–1770.

Educated as a clergyman, he afterwards sold his college fellowship to pay his debts, and went to London, where he settled down. His eccentric and dissipated habits, however, compelled his confinement in a lunatic asylum. Not so mad, however, that he could not compose poetry, he wrote verses with the edge of a key on the wainscot. He died in the King's Bench prison.

SONG OF DAVID.
HUMOROUS AND OTHER VERSES.

The "Song of David" was written under the conditions mentioned above. It is by far his best production, and though it affords evident traces of a confused and deranged intellect, it yet contains many passages of the highest poetic excellence, and "more energetic and magnificent poetry than any short poem of the time."

WILLIAM FALCONER.

1732–1770.

Born at Edinburgh, where his father was a barber. At an early age he went to sea as a common sailor; the experience which he gained and the hardships he had to undergo prepared him for the composition of his poem. He was afterwards a midshipman and purser in the Royal Navy. Setting sail on a voyage in the *Aurora*, to which he had been appointed, the unfortunate vessel was never heard of after leaving the Cape of Good Hope.

THE SHIPWRECK

is a descriptive poem, displaying great genius and

powerful writing. It relates the sufferings that took place on board the *Britannia*, of which he was second mate, when wrecked off Cape Colonna. The poet was one of three who, out of a large crew, were able to make their way from the vessel to the shore.

THOMAS CHATTERTON,

1752–1770,

Was the son of a schoolmaster at Bristol. Educated at a charity school; at the age of fifteen was apprenticed to a solicitor; when seventeen he went to London, feeling confident his talents would soon raise him to greatness. He launched into politics, hoping his services would secure him the support and patronage of the government; but neither by this means nor by his various literary labours was he able to keep himself from starvation. The sudden blasting of those ardent hopes with which he had repaired to the metropolis reduced him to unutterable despair, and he died from a dose of arsenic administered by his own hand before he had attained his eighteenth year.

ROWLEY POEMS.
KEW GARDENS.
ÆLLA.
TRAGEDY OF GODWIN.

The "Rowley Poems" consisted of fictitious lives of painters, authors, etc., which he pretended were composed by one Rowley, a monk of the fifteenth century; but all of which were composed by himself, and written upon stained parchments in the old lettering and spelling. So great were the ingenuity and genius which characterized them, that they passed the judgment of some of the competent judges as the productions of a fifteenth-century versifier. The forgeries contained many passages of the highest poetical excellence, and doubtless, had he begun his career under different cir-

cumstances, or had he lived to prove his powers to the world, he would have taken a high position as a poet.

"Kew Gardens" is a satire inferior in every respect to his celebrated forgeries. It is written in the style of Churchill, possessing all that master's vigour, with every now and then a couplet turned with the felicity of Pope.

THOMAS GRAY.

1716-1771.

A Londoner by birth, being born on Cornhill, the son of a money scrivener of not very good repute. He was educated first at Eton, and afterwards at Cambridge as a pensioner. On leaving the latter he accompanied Horace Walpole, son of the prime minister, on his travels through France and Italy. After spending a year or two abroad, Gray returned to England, and went to Cambridge to take his degree in civil law; and in 1768 he was made professor of modern languages and history in that university. He died of gout in the stomach while in Wales. In disposition he was gentle and retiring, and in temperament inclined to melancholy.

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.
PINDARIC ODES.
THE BARD.
PROGRESS OF POETRY.
ODE TO SPRING.
HYMN TO ADVERSITY.

Gray is one of the most learned of the poets, and all his pieces evince the exquisite refinement of his taste, though, with the exception of his "Elegy," his poetry has never become popular. He is best known by this work, "whose solemn stanzas roll out their muffled music like the subdued tolling of a great minster bell. Corrected and recorrected line by line, as were all this poet's works, it yet shows no sign of elaboration—its melancholy grace is the perfection of art." It was

about seven years in composition, and became popular immediately on publication. In the "Progress of Poetry" Gray's genius manifests itself in a strength and dignity which has been said to be little inferior to Milton. The same may be said of "The Bard:" the last of his race is represented as standing on a crag that overhangs the pass through which King Edward and his army are defiling, and invoking ruin on the race and name of the oppressor of his country. At the conclusion of his hymn of vengeful despair he flings himself into the sea. The lyrics of Gray "display the superior qualities of fancy and tenderness, and, perhaps, owe most of their success to the strong sympathy which the poet everywhere manifests with the joys and sufferings of human nature."

TOBIAS SMOLLETT.

1721–1771.

Eminent as a prose writer and novelist, he yet claims a place among poets by virtue of his

ODE TO LEVEN WATER,

which, with other poetical pieces, displays great delicacy and finish and poetical vigour. The sentiments and feelings portrayed are of the highest order.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

1728–1774.

The chief poems of Goldsmith, who takes a foremost place among English prose writers, are:—

THE TRAVELLER;
THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

The former is a descriptive piece of writing, of the very highest character and merit. It abounds also in contemplative passages. It is much in the fine manner

of Pope. The "Deserted Village" contains some happy delineations of rural life and character, and displays much grace and simplicity. The village Auburn of the tale is a picture of his old home at Lissoy, in Ireland.

ROBERT FERGUSSON.

1751–1774.

Born at Edinburgh, where he followed the profession of lawyer's clerk.

GUID BRAID CLAITH.
TO THE TRON KIRK BELL.

Had this poet lived, he would doubtless have taken a very high position among the describers of city life. The above display great genius, though they are of the most homely and rugged character.

JOHN ARMSTRONG,

1709–1779,

A native of Scotland and a physician, was the author of

THE ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH,

a poem of some excellence, written in a didactic manner, and intended to convey in a poetic form some rules and laws concerning sanitary science.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

1709–1784.

Claiming a first place among the prose writers, he yet deserves mention among the poets as the author of poems entitled:—

THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES;
LONDON: A SATIRE;
MISCELLANEOUS VERSES.

His poetry is not, however, equal to his prose, yet the "Vanity of Human Wishes" has a moral impressiveness that belongs to few writers since the time of Pope. It has been remarked that, while his prose and conversation abounded in metaphor, he has introduced but little of that kind of illustration into his poems.

WILLIAM JULIUS MICKLE,

1734–1788,

Born in Dumfriesshire, is known by his

ORIGINAL POEMS, AND A
TRANSLATION OF THE LUSIAD.

The poems are marvels of versification, beyond which they have little to recommend them, being almost destitute of poetical excellence. The "Translation of the Lusiad" of Camoens, a Portuguese poet, is well and poetically done.

JOHN LOGAN.

1748–1788.

Born at Soutra, in Midlothian, where his father rented a small farm. Educated at the school of Musselburgh, near Edinburgh, and at the University of Edinburgh. In 1768 he took a situation as private tutor, but returned to Edinburgh with a view of entering the Church. In 1770 he was admitted preacher, and in 1773 was invited to the pastoral charge at South Leith, which he accepted.

ODE TO THE CUCKOO.
THE BRAES OF YARROW.
ODE ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG LADY.
THE LOVERS.

Logan deserves a very high rank among our minor poets. The chief character of his poetry is the

pathetic. His works are full of passages of true poetic spirit and sensibility.

JAMES MACPHERSON.

1738–1796.

Born at Kingussie, in Inverness-shire. Was educated at King's College, Aberdeen, and afterwards became a schoolmaster in his native village. In 1764 he was appointed surveyor-general of the Floridas, with a salary for life, and agent to the Nabob of Arcot in 1779. In 1780 he entered parliament as M.P. for Camelford, and sat for ten years. He afterwards retired to an estate which he had purchased at Belleville, in Inverness-shire, where he lived during the remainder of his life.

THE HIGHLANDER.
FINGAL.
TEMORA.

Macpherson was a Scottish Chatterton. The two latter poems are epics, and he professed to have translated them from materials discovered in the Highlands of Scotland: the opinion is general that he "*discovered* them in his own desk, written on his own paper, with his own pen." They are pictures of the old Celtic life, drawn in strong and florid colours, and are full of stirring incidents.

ROBERT BURNS,

1759–1796,

Was born near Ayr, in Scotland, the son of a farmer. The straitened circumstances of his father rendered it necessary that his children should contribute to their own support at a very early age, and Burns has himself told us that "the cheerless gloom of the hermit, with the unceasing moil of the galley-slave," brought

him to his sixteenth year. After the death of his father in 1781, he took a small farm, which did not prove a prosperous undertaking. He resolved then to go to the West Indies. Partly to procure the means of paying his passage, he published a collection of poems which he had composed. The reception these met with was highly favourable, and while he was preparing to embark, he received a letter encouraging him to go to Edinburgh and issue a new edition. This was the turning point of his life. During his stay in the Scottish metropolis he associated with all who were eminent in letters, rank, and fashion. The profits of the publication were considerable, and enabled him to take a farm near Dumfries, where he settled in 1788. With his farm he conjoined the office of an exciseman; but after three or four years he was obliged to give up farming, and from that time lived in Dumfries, dependent on his salary.

Having by some unguarded expressions on the French Revolution incurred the displeasure of government, his hopes of promotion were blasted, and caused him to be shunned by those who had before *fêted* him. The bitterness of his feelings was aggravated by his declining health. Tortured by anxiety, harassed by poverty, and a slave to the vice of intemperance, his brief though brilliant career was terminated at the early age of thirty-seven.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS AND SONGS.

Burns is most known by his songs. "The Twa Dogs," "The Jolly Beggars," "Tam O'Shanter," and "Halloween" are among the best specimens of his humorous and descriptive poetry; and in serious composition "The Cotter's Saturday Night" is a beautiful picture of rustic home life. "O Mary at thy window be" is a charming example of the lyrical force and sweetness to be found in his love songs. The lines to a "Daisy" and a "Mouse" are among the earliest of his poems, and were written while he was a ploughman:

"they are true wild flowers, touched with a fairy grace and breathing a delicate fragrance, such as the blossoms of no cultured garden can ever boast." "Tam O'Shanter" is a serio-comic tale, describing a market-day carouse and ride through a storm at midnight. The vigorous thought, the felicitous expression, the pathos, the passion, which characterize the poetry of Burns, have placed him in a high position among English poets.

WILLIAM MASON.

1725–1797.

Born in Yorkshire, and educated at Cambridge, where he made the acquaintance of the poet Gray, which acquaintance ripened into the closest friendship, and continued till the death of the latter.

THE ENGLISH GARDEN,

a blank-verse poem in four books, which contains some pretty passages and pictures.

THOMAS WARTON.

1728–1800.

Was born at Basingstoke, educated at a private tutor's, under his father's eye, till he went to Oxford. In his sixteenth year he was admitted a commoner of Trinity College, and soon after was elected a scholar. He lived at Oxford for forty-seven years, with very few intervals. In 1757 he was elected Professor of Poetry at Pembroke College, in which office he succeeded his father. He held it for ten years. In 1767 he took his degree of B.D., and in 1771 was elected a fellow of the Unitarian Society. In October, the same year, he was instituted to the living of Kiddington, in Oxfordshire, where he remained till 1782, when he was presented by his college to the donative of Hill

Farrance, in Somersetshire. In 1785 he was chosen Camden Professor of History, and offered the post of poet laureate, which he accepted. He died somewhat suddenly, from a paralytic stroke at Bath, in his sixty-second year.

THE TRIUMPH OF ISIS.
NEWMARKET.
THE SUICIDE.
THE PLEASURES OF MELANCHOLY.

In general, Warton seems to have taken Milton for his model. His descriptive pieces are full of originality. Nothing can be more natural, just, or delightful, than his pictures of rural life. The only objection which some critics have stated is, that his descriptions are not varied by reflection. He gives an exquisite landscape, but does not always express the feelings it creates.

WILLIAM COWPER,

1731–1800,

Was born at Great Berkhampstead; his father was Chaplain to George II., the nephew of a Lord Chancellor, and Rector of Berkhampstead. At the age of six his mother died, and he was placed at a school in Herts until he was old enough to go to Westminster School. After leaving the latter, where he stayed seven years, he was articled to an attorney in London. After completing his three years' articles he went to reside in the Middle Temple, 1752. In 1754 he was called to the bar, but never practised. In 1759 he removed to the Inner Temple, and soon after his settlement there he was appointed a Commissioner of Bankrupts. He was afterwards offered the office of Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords, which he accepted, but having to undergo an examination at the bar of the House, he was seized with nervousness and could not appear. At this period the

misery engendered by his exceeding nervousness and sensitiveness was so great, that he meditated suicide, but failed to carry out his intentions for lack of courage. In 1763 he was removed to the house of Dr. Colton, at St. Albans, a prey to deep religious melancholy. On his recovery he removed to Huntingdonshire, where he became a boarder in the house of the Rev. Mr. Unwin. In 1773 he went to visit the celebrated John Newton, and whilst there his malady returned, and for four years he remained in this melancholy condition; and it was during the interval between the second and third attack of this dreadful malady that he produced his poems. In 1794 he was again afflicted. After lingering on for three years, with a few brief intervals of reason, he died. A pension of £300 a year from the king placed him above want during the latter period of his life.

THE TASK.
OLNEY HYMNS.
JOHN GILPIN.
TRANSLATION OF HOMER.
LINES TO HIS MOTHER'S PICTURE.

The origin of "The Task" was as follows: Lady Austen asked him to write some blank verse, and playfully gave him the "Sofa" as a subject. Beginning a poem on this homely theme, he produced six books, which he called "The Task." It is a humorous historical sketch of the gradual improvement of seats, the three-legged stool growing into the softly cushioned sofa. The pleasures of a country walk are then touched on; and he draws a strong contrast between rural and city life. In the second book he utters a just and powerful denunciation of slavery, and declares the blessings and the need of peace among nations. The other books are devoted to the following subjects: "The Garden," "The Winter Evening," "The Winter Morning Walk," and "The Winter Walk at Noon." "John Gilpin," now one of the most popular of ballads, is founded upon a story told to the poet by Lady

Austen, which he immediately turned into verse. A rich but quiet humour pervades it, and indeed constitutes its entire merit. The deep religious feeling which tinges all his works is displayed, and finds ample scope, in the "Olney Hymns."

The "Translation of Homer" attained a certain amount of success. It is, however, by the side of that of Pope, somewhat tedious and monotonous, though perhaps more faithful.

Cowper's "Lines to his Mother's Picture" are especially deserving of attention. This celebrated poem was written more than fifty years after her death, which occurred when he was only six years of age. It displays much tenderness of feeling and vividness of imagination, especially with which scenes of the past are represented. It is, however, unequal in its power, some passages being trivial and poetically worthless.

Cowper's especial merit lies in the grace with which he describes the familiar scenes and thoughts and enjoyments of home, in unaffected and unrestrained expression. "His language has such a masculine idiomatic strength, and his manner, whether he rises into grace or falls into negligence, has so much plain and familiar freedom, that we read no poetry with a deeper conviction of its sentiments having come from the author's heart; and of the enthusiasm, in whatever he describes, having been unfeigned. * * He blends the determination of age with an exquisite and ingenuous sensibility; and though he sports very much with his subjects, yet when he is in earnest, there is a gravity of long-felt conviction in his sentiments, which gives an uncommon ripeness of character to his poetry." Cowper united to a genius which has rendered him one of the most original of the British poets, a spirit of fervent devotion, and an intense desire to render mankind wiser and better by his writings. His poetry is eminently healthy, natural, and unaffected.

ERASMUS DARWIN.

1731–1802.

Born near Newark, in Nottinghamshire, studied first at Cambridge and afterwards at Edinburgh, where he took his degree. He was a physician by profession, and practised with distinction and success at Lichfield. He had a great reputation as a physiologist, but his system is, for the most part, inconsequential, baseless, and untenable.

BOTANIC GARDEN.
LOVES OF THE PLANTS.
TEMPLE OF NATURE.

The first poem, the "Botanic Garden," was published in detached portions between the years 1781 and 1792. It consists of an allegorical exposition of the Linnæan system of plants. It is a work of some ingenuity, and is written in a brilliant and polished manner. In the three poems, attempts are made "to give the charms of poetry and allegory to scientific subjects." Darwin's reputation as a poet was bright but brief. Though he had command of language he lacked fancy, and though brilliant he was without animation. The subjects that he chose to write on are without interest to general readers. Still he did something, by the originality of his writings and the metaphorical treatment of his subjects, to awaken a regard for poetry. His works are little read at the present time, and what reputation he had has greatly declined.

JAMES BEATTIE,

1735-1803,

Was born at Laurencekirk, in Kincardineshire, Scotland, and studied at Marischal College, Aberdeen. In 1758 he was appointed one of the masters of the grammar-school in that city, and in 1760 Professor

of Moral Philosophy in Marischal College. After the production of his poem he was honoured by the interest of the king and queen, who bestowed upon him a pension of £200 per annum. He was also made a Doctor of Laws at Oxford, and a Member of the American Philosophical Society. After some sad domestic trials and bereavements, he was himself attacked with palsy, and died at Aberdeen.

THE MINSTREL.

The poem describes the progress of a rustic genius, from the first dawning of his poetical fancy till he arrives at the period when he is fit to appear before the world as a minstrel. It is a delightful poem, and overflows with sweet poetic emotion. It is rich in picturesque descriptions, while the versification has a quiet fulness of melody. It is written in the Spenserian stanza.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE,

1785–1803,

Was the son of a butcher, and born at Nottingham. At fourteen he was apprenticed to the trade of stocking-weaving, but disliking it beyond endurance, he entered as clerk in an attorney's office. While there he made himself acquainted with both Latin and Greek, French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. Obtaining a silver medal offered by the "Monthly Preceptor," for the best translation of "Horace," he resolved to dedicate his talents to poetry. In this he was assisted by Mr. Capel Sofft, who encouraged him to publish a small volume of poems. Southey also helped him, and he was enabled to go to Cambridge, where he studied with the view of entering the Church. He studied, however, so hard, that his health was undermined, and though strong medicines enabled him to go through the six days' examination, out of which he came the first man

of his year, he gradually sank and died at St. John's College.

CLIFTON GROVE
REMAINS.

The former is the principal poem in his first volume, and it shows a wonderful proficiency. The character of the writing is smooth, and the versification is both easy and elegant. In his "Remains," edited by Southey, are a number of poems of the most charming kind. Kirke White's poetry is by no means of the highest class, nor does it display many marks of great genius, but it is so exquisitely tender and touching, and is rich in fanciful descriptive passages.

CHRISTOPHER ANSTEY,

1724–1805,

Was a gentleman possessed of some considerable fortune in Cambridgeshire, in which county he resided. He wrote

THE NEW BATH GUIDE,

which affords a most vivid description of the life and manners of that city in the reign of George III. The poem displays great satirical power and wit, but is of a licentious character.

MRS. MARY TIGHE.

1773–1810.

Born in Wicklow county, Ireland. She wrote a poem entitled

PSYCHE,

founded upon the story of "Cupid and Psyche," in Apuleius. It exhibits much that is pleasing in thought and style, and is remarkable for its graceful fancy and display of imagination.

ROBERT TANNAHILL.

1774–1810.

Born at Paisley. Was in early life a weaver. He committed suicide by drowning, after burning all his manuscripts, because of the rejection of his poems by a publisher to whom he had sent them.

GLOOMY WINTER'S NOW AWA'.
JESSIE THE FLOWER O' DUMBLANE.

These two specimens of his Scottish songs are of far higher merit than any of his poems. They are of a most original character, and of great sweetness and power.

THOMAS PERCY.

1728–1811.

Born in Shropshire, and educated at Cambridge. He was successively Dean of Carlisle and Bishop of Dromore.

RELIQUES OF ENGLISH POETRY.

These old songs produced a great effect in awakening a taste for the "unaffected strains of simple narrative and genuine passion," and to them Scott and other poets owe much inspiration. They were revised and often supplemented by Percy, and include a great variety of ballads, some of which date back to the days of the early minstrels.

JAMES GRAHAME.

1765–1811.

Born in Glasgow, where he followed the profession of an advocate at the Scottish bar. He subsequently

became a clergyman and curate of Sedgefield, near Durham.

THE SABBATH.
MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.
SABBATH WALKS.
BRITISH GEORGICS.

"The Sabbath" is a poem in blank verse, which appeared in an anonymous form and without the slightest pretension. It soon, however, obtained the approbation which its merits deserved. It contains many fine passages, which embody the hallowed associations connected with the day of rest. On its first publication, so profoundly had the secret of its authorship been kept, that Grahame had the pleasure of hearing the book recommended to him for reading by his own wife, while she was still unacquainted with the fact that her husband had written it.

Grahame is not an easy, graceful poet; and though his verse is full of tender and devout feeling, it has little vigour or imagination. He has been compared to Cowper, but wants that poet's humour, force, and depth of poetic passion.

JOHN LEYDEN.

1775–1811.

Born in Roxburghshire, the son of a peasant. By virtue of his energy of character and vigour of intellect, he attained a tolerable position in life. He studied for and entered the church, but finding medicine a more congenial profession, he gave up his clerical duties, and became a surgeon in the service of the East India Company. While in India he devoted himself to the study of the various Oriental languages,

and accompanied Lord Minto in his expedition against Java.

POETICAL REMAINS.

These were published after his death by the Rev. James Morton, and the merit they display was soon recognized and acknowledged. Sir Walter Scott was among those who admired the poetry, and spoke highly of them.

JOHN KEATS.

1795–1820.

Born in London, of obscure birth. In his fifteenth year he was apprenticed to a surgeon, but he subsequently abandoned the profession of medicine to follow that of literature.

In 1820 he left England to go to Rome for the benefit of his failing health, but the change was of little avail. The young poet died of consumption, and was buried in the Protestant cemetery there. This consumption was brought on by a criticism of his first poem by the "Quarterly Review," which so affected him and embittered his existence, that only the most anxious care and watching prevented his committing suicide. As it was, he broke a blood-vessel in the lungs, which prematurely caused death.

ENDYMION: A POETIC ROMANCE.
HYPERION.
EVE OF ST. AGNES.
LAMIA, ISABELLA,
ETC.

"Endymion: a Poetic Romance," displays some brilliant qualities and a most luxurious imagination. The "Eve of St. Agnes" is full of rich description, and possesses a great charm of romance.

Keats gave promise of great excellence, and had he lived would have given evidence of the possession of rare powers. In those poems in which he confines himself to the mythological, Keats is the more successful. "It would seem as if the severity of ancient art, which in the last-mentioned works acted as an involuntary check upon a too luxuriant fancy, deserted him when he left the antique world; and the absence of true, deep, intense passion (his prevailing defect) becomes necessarily more painfully apparent, as well as the discordant mingling of the *prettinesses* of modern poetry with the directness and unaffected simplicity of Chaucer and Boccaccio. But Keats was a true poet. If we consider his extreme youth and delicate health, his solitary and interesting self-instruction, the severity of the attacks made upon him by hostile and powerful critics, and above all the original richness and picturesqueness of his conceptions and imagery, even when they run to waste, he appears to be one of the greatest of the young poets."

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY,

1792–1822,

Was the son of a wealthy baronet, who resided at Field Place, in Sussex, at which place he was born. He was educated first at Eton and afterwards at Oxford, from which he was expelled for atheism, which he inculcated in a pamphlet entitled the "Necessity of Atheism." Taking up his residence at Marlow, in Buckinghamshire, he devoted himself to writing and study. After making one unhappy marriage, which was dissolved by his wife destroying herself, he married again, and his health being delicate and requiring a change of air and climate, he went to the south of Italy, where he could exercise his favourite pastime of boating. One day, as he was returning in his little yacht to Leghorn, a squall of wind overtook the little craft in the Bay of Spezzia, and it went down. The re-

mains of the poet were burnt upon a funereal pile, and the ashes buried in the Protestant cemetery at Rome.

QUEEN MAB.
ALASTOR; OR, THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE.
ROSALIND AND HELEN.
REVOLT OF ISLAM.
PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.
MINOR POEMS.

"Queen Mab" is a poem of undoubted merit, and though it contains many passages of wild and extravagant fancy, it is possessed of a most melodious ring. Though full of power and beauty, "it is debased in its very grain and groundwork by rank infidelity and blasphemy." "Alastor" was written while he was residing for a short time in Windsor forest, the forest glades of which tended to the conception of so gloomy a production. It represents a young man, possessed of a most lofty and benevolent disposition, dying because he cannot meet with a companion with a nature and disposition similar to his own.

"Rosalind and Helen" is on the subject of ill-assorted marriages, which Shelley knew by experience to be great. "The Revolt of Islam," "an ideal picture of the struggle maintained by an awakened people against the beliefs and institutions that it had previously held sacred, but which in the heated fancy of the poet appeared as the causes of all its misery, was published in 1817." It is in twelve cantos, the metre being the Spenserian stanza.

Among his minor poems may be mentioned "The Cloud," "The Skylark," and the charming "Sensitive Plant," each of which "actually overflow with lyrical beauty, both of thought and language."

Mr. Shaw thus sums up his characteristics:—"By a singular anomaly or contrast, Shelley, whose mind was so filled with images of superhuman grace and beauty, exhibits occasionally a morbid tendency to dwell on ideas of a hideous and repulsive character. Like the ocean, his genius, so pure, transparent, and sublime, the

parent of so many forms of strange and fairy loveliness, hides within its abysses monstrous and horrible shapes at which imagination recoils. His mode of writing is full of pictures, but the images subsidiary to or illustrative of the principal thought are often made more prominent than the thought they are intended to enforce. Nay, he very frequently goes farther, and makes the antitype and the type change places; the illustrative image becoming the principal object, and thus destroying the due subordination of the ornament to the edifice it is intended to decorate. Shakspeare's miraculous imagination, it is true, seems sometimes almost to run away with him; but when closely studied, it will be found that he never fails to keep his principal idea always above and distinct from even his wildest outbursts of fancy, and ever remains master of his thought."

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

1766–1823.

Born at Honington, near Bury St. Edmunds, in Suffolk, where he followed the occupation of a shoemaker.

THE FARMER'S BOY.
RURAL TALES.
MAY DAY WITH THE MUSES.

The first of these poems has obtained a great reputation. Written under the most adverse circumstances, it displays great poetic talent, and is full of passages of great beauty. It delineates with great truth and delicacy the various phases of country life.

CHARLES WOLFE.

1791–1823.

A minister of the Episcopalian church at Dublin, who died of consumption; was the author of a well-known poem, entitled

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE.

Its pathos and genuine poetic feeling has secured to him a lasting reputation.

LORD BYRON.

1788–1824.

George Gordon, afterwards Lord Byron, born at Dover, was the son of a captain in the Guards, who abandoned his wife and child in the streets of London and went abroad, where he died soon after. His mother retired to Aberdeen, her native place, with her little lame son. At an early age he came into the possession of Newstead Abbey and the title of Lord Byron by the death of his grandfather. He then studied at Harrow and Cambridge, where he led a dissipated life. While yet in Harrow School he formed a passionate attachment for a young female, Miss Chaworth, whose father had been killed in a duel by Byron's great uncle, after a brawl in an hotel. She, however, preferred to Byron a former suitor. The disappointment inflicted on Byron a deep wound. After quitting the University he threw himself into the whirlpool of vice, and undermined his health and wasted his substance. He was the soul of riotous company, taking part in every game and amusement, except dancing, for which he was incapacitated by lameness in one of his feet.

Byron's marriage with Miss Milbanke took place in 1815. From the beginning there were disagreements, and in a twelvemonth the union was dissolved. For his conduct to his wife he was much abused by all the London papers, and hissed in the streets.

Becoming disgusted with England, he set out on his travels in 1816. He went through Belgium and Switzerland, where he became acquainted with Shelley; stopped a long while at Venice and in Tuscany, where he was detained by a strong passion for the beautiful Countess Guiccioli. While at Venice, Ravenna, and

at Rome, he led a most dissipated and irregular life, receiving much money for his poems; but sinking even lower down into vice and immorality. In 1819 he took an interest in the projects for the political emancipation of Italy; and when these failed he devoted himself to the cause of the Greeks, for with all his excesses he had noble sympathies, and was capable of great actions. His generosity was exemplified in the devotement with which, going into Greece, he lavished his resources on behalf of that classic land, which had taken a strong hold of his vivid and impressionable imagination. His efforts, however, issued in his own death, for he died at Missolonghi, his end having been hastened by vexations arising from the internal dissensions of his Greek allies.

The personal character of Lord Byron was an extraordinary "mixture of benevolence and misanthropy, and of aspirations after excellence, with a practical enslavement to degrading vices. The only key to the mystery is to be found in that theory which represents the temperament of genius, in its extreme forms, as a species of insanity."

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.
THE GIAOUR.
THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS.
THE CORSAIR.
THE SIEGE OF CORINTH.
THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.
MANFRED.
DON JUAN.

The production of "Don Juan" placed him immediately in the front rank of the poets. It is the description of a young and satiated libertine, who endeavours to rouse himself from the listless and melancholy condition into which he has fallen by travel in foreign lands. The two first cantos were published in 1812, and the poem was completed in 1818. The third canto was composed at Geneva, and the fourth at Venice. It is written in the style of the Spenserian stanza, which suits the character of the poem, which is

gloomy and contemplative. "The Giaour," and "The Bride of Abydos," were produced in 1813, and are written in eight-syllabled lines. "The Corsair" came the following year. These are tales of Turkish life, and were formed out of the materials gathered during his travels.

"Don Juan," the last great literary effort which Byron made, is a licentious but witty and humorous tale, which was left unfinished, breaking off at the sixteenth canto. It is a strange medley, in which satire, narrative, description, and criticism are jumbled together without any principle of arrangement, and composed in the eight-line stanza. Perhaps no poem in the English language shows a greater command of the powers of versification. The sentiment of the poetry ascends from what is low and lustful to the highest purity and sublimity.

"It stands, a fragment of unfinished toil, a sad memento of lofty genius debased to the foulest use. Never were shining gold and black mire so industriously heaped together. It seems as if the unhappy bard, tired of hating his fellow-mortals, had turned with fierce mockery upon himself, to degrade and trample on that very genius upon which was based his only claim to admiration, and which alone can save from ridicule his scornful isolation of himself."

Byron's poetry, like his person, has much that is very beautiful; at the same time it is not free from deformity; and, like his soul, it is full of ungoverned passion and extravagant emotion, no less than of sublime thoughts and noble aspirations. "He delights in the delineation of a certain morbid exaltation of character and of feeling—a sort of demoniacal sublimity. He is haunted almost perpetually with the image of a being feeding upon, and fed by, violent passions, and the recollections of the catastrophes they have occasioned; and, though worn out by their past indulgence, unable to sustain the burden of an existence which they do not continue to animate—full of pride and

revenge and obstinacy, disdaining life and death, and mankind and himself, and trampling in his scorn, not only upon the falsehood and formality of polished life, but upon its tame virtues; yet envying, by fits, the selfish beings he despises, and melting into mere softness and compassion when the helplessness of childhood, or the frailty of woman, make an appeal to his generosity; a perpetual stream of quick-coming fancies — an eternal spring of fresh-blown images, which seem called into existence by the sudden flash of those glowing thoughts and overwhelming emotions that struggle for expression through the whole flow of his poetry, and impart to a diction that is often abrupt and irregular, a force and a charm which seem frequently to realize all that is said of inspirations."

WILLIAM GIFFORD.

1756–1826.

Born at Ashburton, in Devonshire. He was for some years the editor of the "Quarterly Review," and published some satires.

THE BAVIAD.
THE MÆVIAD.
SENTIMENTAL POEMS.

The satires were directed against a number of trivial versifiers of his day, who forced themselves upon the public attention. The poems are of considerable merit and poetical value.

REGINALD HEBER.

1783–1826.

Born at Malpas, in Cheshire, and educated at Oxford, where he distinguished himself in both Latin and English versification. He became a fellow of All Souls'

College, and then entered the Church. In 1822 he was appointed Bishop of Calcutta, and entered upon a sphere of the most active usefulness, which was terminated in a sad and unexpected manner. He was found dead in his bath.

PALESTINE.
EUROPE.
FROM GREENLAND'S ICY MOUNTAINS.

The first was a prize poem, written at Oxford, for which he gained great distinction. Heber is better known by his missionary hymns than by his other productions: the least of his poems breathe the purest thoughts and most genuine poetical sentiment. The expression "Gentle Heber" is as indicative of the character of his works as of his manhood.

ROBERT POLLOK.

1799–1827.

Born at Muirhouse, Renfrewshire, and educated at Glasgow. He became a minister of the United Secession Church of Scotland.

THE COURSE OF TIME

is a long poem in blank verse, and professes to be a sketch of the life and end of man. It is a work of considerable merit, and many passages give evidence that the author had considerable power of writing. It is strongly tinged with Calvinistic doctrine, and occasionally the style is pompous and inflated.

GEORGE CRABBE.

1754–1832.

Born at Aldborough, in Suffolk, where his father was the salt-master, or collector of salt duties in the town. He seems to have been treated with some harshness by his father, for which he consoled himself by treasuring

up and reading over and over again the verses in a periodical to which his father subscribed. At the age of fourteen, after grounding himself in classics and mathematics, he was apprenticed to a surgeon and apothecary, at Wickam Brook, near Bury St. Edmunds. Meeting with such great ill-usage, he was removed to another master at Woodbridge, in Suffolk, where he cultivated the talent for making verses that had already developed itself. In the house of his master he "filled a drawer with poetry." The success of an effort to win a prize for a poem on Hope, offered by the proprietor of a magazine, encouraged him to proceed. After attempting to establish himself as an apothecary in his native town, he set off for London, where he hoped to attain to fame and fortune by his literary efforts. Borrowing from Mr. Dudley North, whose brother had once contested Aldborough in an election, five pounds to pay his journey, he set off in a small sloop, and soon stood alone and unknown in the streets of London. For a time he was unfortunate, his poems were refused, and no publisher would help him. Having in vain solicited assistance from Lord North, then Prime Minister, in a lucky moment he thought of bringing his circumstances under the notice of the celebrated Edmund Burke, whose penetrating eye at once discerned the merits of his poems. Burke generously extended to him the help of which he stood in need, assisted him with his counsel, and it was under his auspices that "The Library" and "The Village" were presented to the world. By the advice of Burke he qualified himself for, and entered the Church of England, being ordained in 1782. Appointed curate at Aldborough, he was, through the influence of his patron, appointed domestic chaplain to the Duke of Rutland, and took up his abode at Belvoir Castle. Soon after this he was presented with two small livings in Dorsetshire. Some years later he received from the Duke of Rutland the living of Trowbridge, where he resided for the remainder of his life, a quiet, unassuming, conscientious country

parson. His "moral character was an almost perfect model."

THE LIBRARY.
THE VILLAGE.
THE NEWSPAPER.
THE PARISH REGISTER.
THE BOROUGH.
TALES IN VERSE.
TALES OF THE HALL.

So decided was the success of "The Library" and "The Village," published as above, through the kind patronage of Burke, that the fame of Crabbe was at once sealed. "The Village," which is in two books, paints in perfectly truthful lines actual characters of rustic society, without embellishments, or what is termed "poetic license." It made a very strong impression on the public mind. "The Newspaper" appeared in 1785, and then, for twenty-one years, his poet's pen was idle. In 1807 he appeared with "The Parish Register," founded upon the same basis as "The Village." It is, perhaps, the most successful of all his works, though not the best. "The Borough" contains the most powerful painting. Besides the "Tales in Verse" and the "Tales of the Hall," there was another series of tales published during his lifetime. By these three sets of tales he is, perhaps, better known to the generality of readers than by any of his works. For the "Tales of the Hall," with the remaining copyright of his poems, he received the large sum of £3,000.

"The English poor—their woes, weaknesses, and sins—form the almost unvarying theme of Crabbe's poetry. Himself a poor man's son, he could not help, whenever he visited the hovels or the parish workhouse at Muston or at Trowbridge, recollecting the days when he had played with ragged boys down by the shipping in the little harbour of Aldborough; or when he had stood by the sick beds of labourers and boatmen, a poor country surgeon, living a more wretched and precarious life than many of his patients. He had been himself within the veil of the poor man's life—he had himself

felt many of the sorrows that smite the poor; and thus it was that he could produce, with such marvellous truth and minuteness of detail, those grey photographs of humble village life. The distinguishing feature of his poetry is the wonderful minuteness of his descriptive passages. One of the most objective of our poets, he described faithfully all that he saw, and little seems to have escaped his searching ken. Upon the sea he dwells with especial love, and whether he writes of it as the gentle, sunny thing, that taps lazily at the side of a stranded ship, or the fierce and powerful element that sweeps in white fury over sharp and splintered rocks, some of his finest lines flow and brighten in its praise."

"The literary character of Crabbe is that of a stern but accurate delineator of human nature in its less pleasing aspect and less happy circumstances: he loved to follow out the history of vice and misery in all their obscure windings, and to appal and melt his readers by the most startling pictures of woe. Care must be taken to keep in mind that his writings do not present a just view of human nature and human life *on the whole;* for a mistake of this kind might lead such of his readers as possess little knowledge of the world into a great error. With all his severity, he has much tenderness; and it must excite our surprise that this quality is more apparent in his later than in his earlier poems. His works are also distinguished throughout by very high moral aims."

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

1771-1832.

The prose works of Sir Walter Scott have so completely identified him as one of the foremost in the rank of novelists, that the fame of his poems pales before them. An account of his life and circumstances will be duly found in its place as a prose writer. It was, however, in poetry that he made his

first literary efforts, and this in the translation of some of Burger's poems.

LENORE.
WILD HUNTSMAN.
MINSTRELSY OF THE SCOTTISH BORDER.
LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.
MARMION.
LADY OF THE LAKE.
VISION OF DON RODERICK.
LORD OF THE ISLES.
ROKEBY.
HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS.

The two first translations are "ballads of great wildness and power." The second, as its name implies, is a collection of the ballads of that district. Many of them are original, but most were gathered among his many tours in Southern Scotland. The "Lay of the Last Minstrel" was the first of the series of grand poems, or metrical tales, in which he revives the "manners, incidents, and sentiments of chivalrous times." It was not entirely original, the subject being suggested by the tale of "Gilpin Horner." "Marmion," the "Lady of the Lake," the "Lord of the Isles," are all of this character, and refer to various periods in Scottish history. "Rokeby" is a tale of the seventeenth century, and relates the incidents connected with the civil wars. All these poems were received with the greatest favour and avidity. In the course of six years no less than 25,000 copies were sold of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," so popular did it immediately become. The style of the verse is to a certain extent an imitation of the short irregular measure adopted by the early minstrels. The verses are in flowing lines of eight syllables, and characterized by great fluency and brilliant colouring. The poetical power decreases in each successive work. Even Scott himself was tired of "Harold" before he had completed it, and worked at the concluding portion "in an agony of impatience and dissatisfaction," acknowledging that Byron was a far superior poet. To this circumstance is perhaps due the fact that he turned

his attention to the other department of literature in which he shines so brilliantly. As a strictly narrative poet, he did not attempt to melt the feelings, to awaken meditative thought, or to lead the mind into wild and supernatural regions; he only endeavoured to entertain the great bulk of mankind with such a relation of probable, though romantic, events as they might be supposed capable of appreciating. The *poetry* of his writings expressly consists in the feeling which he excites in association with those events—a feeling of admiration and wonder, which we are apt to entertain for everything connected with the past, but especially for the former circumstances of that which is still before our eyes.

WILLIAM SOTHEBY.

1759–1833.

Born in London, and educated at Harrow. He chose the army as his profession, in which he remained till the year 1780, when he retired to devote himself to literature.

POETICAL DESCRIPTION OF WALES.
TRANSLATION OF THE GEORGICS.
CONSTANCE DE CASTILE.
TRANSLATION OF THE ILIAD AND ODYSSEY.
TRANSLATION OF WIELAND'S OBERON.

He was possessed of great learning, and his translations display great skill and a thorough knowledge of languages. "Constance de Castile" is written in imitation of Sir Walter Scott's romance poems. The translation of "Oberon" has been greatly praised.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

1772–1834.

Born in Devonshire, at St. Mary Ottery, of which place his father was vicar. Educated first at Christ's

Hospital, he passed from thence to Cambridge, which he left without obtaining a degree, and then enlisted as a trooper in the 15th regiment of Light Dragoons. From this position he was rescued by his friends four months afterwards, through the intercession of his captain, who observed some Latin words written under his saddle as it hung upon the wall. He then lived some time at Bristol, where he and his friends, Southey and others, planned the pantisocracy, or domestic republic, which was to be founded upon the banks of the Susquehanna. Failing the most important portion of the scheme—the money to carry it out—Coleridge was employed by a bookseller to write. He then contracted a marriage with a girl whose sister had already become Southey's wife. The pair lived together some time at Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire. Coleridge then paid a visit to Germany, the expenses of which journey were defrayed by the Wedgwoods of Staffordshire, and upon his return he took up his permanent abode at Keswick, where he stayed ten years, with the exception of a brief period, during which he acted as secretary to the Governor of Malta, and paid a visit to that island. In 1810 he returned to London, and lived till his death at Highgate, sheltered and cared for by his friend Gillman, the surgeon. Carlyle's portrait of Coleridge is thus painted: "Brow and head were round, and of massive weight; but the face was flabby and irresolute. The deep eyes, of a light hazel, were as full of sorrow as of inspiration; confused pain looked mildly from them, as in a kind of mild astonishment. The whole figure and air, good and amiable otherwise, might be called flabby and irresolute; expressive of weakness under possibility of strength. He hung loosely on his limbs, with knees bent, and stooping attitude; in walking, he rather shuffled than decisively stepped; and a lady once remarked, he never could fix which side of the garden-walk would suit him best, but continually shifted, in cork-screw fashion, and kept trying both. A heavy-laden, high-aspiring, and surely much-suffering

man. His voice, naturally soft and good, had contracted itself into a plaintive snuffle and sing-song; he spoke as if preaching—you would have said preaching earnestly, and also hopelessly, the weightiest things. I still recollect his 'object' and 'subject,'—terms of continual recurrence in the Kantean province; and how he sung and snuffled them into 'om-m-mject' and 'sum-m-mject,' with a kind of solemn shake or quaver, as he rolled along."

Early in life Coleridge contracted the fatal habit of opium-eating, and the grand defect of his character was irresolution. "His life," says Mr. Collier, "was a succession of beginnings which never saw an end. He went to college, but took no degree. He prepared for emigration, but did not start. He got married, but left others to support his wife and children. At twenty-five he planned an epic on the 'Destruction of Jerusalem,' but to-morrow—and to-morrow—and to-morrow—passed without one written line. A great genius with a great infirmity—the twinhood of mental strength and feebleness—he claims at once our reverence and our deep compassion."

CHRISTABEL.
GENEVIEVE.
THE ANCIENT MARINER.
ODE TO MONT BLANC.
ODE TO THE DEPARTING YEAR.

Both "Christabel" and "Genevieve" are fragments—noble examples of what might have been done. "Christabel" was given to the world by the advice of Byron. "It is a tale of strange witchcraft. A sweet and innocent girl, praying for her lover's safety beneath a huge oak tree, outside the castle gate, under the dim moonlight of an April sky, is startled by the appearance of a witch, disguised as a richly-clad beauty in distress. The gentle Christabel asks the wanderer into the castle; the disguise is there laid aside; some horrible shape smites the poor hospitable maid into a trance; and the blinking glance of the witch's small, dull, snake-like eyes,

shot suddenly at the shuddering victim, clouds the innocent blue of her eye with a passive imitation of the same hateful look."

For exquisite tenderness and depth of feeling, the love-song "Genevieve" cannot be surpassed.

The "Ancient Mariner" "is a poem in the simple, picturesque style of the old ballad. The tale—told to a spell-bound wedding guest by an old sailor, who, in a few vivid touches, is made to stand before us with grey beard, glittering eyes, and long, brown, skinny hands—enchains us with strange and mystic power. The shooting of the albatross, that came through the snowy fog to cheer the crew—the red blistering calm that fell upon the sea—the skeleton ship with its phantom dicers driving across the sun in view of the thirst-scorched seamen—the lonely life of the guilty mariner on the rolling sea amid the corpses of his shipmates—the springing of good thoughts at the sight of the beautiful water-snakes sporting 'beyond the shadow of the ship'—the coming of sleet, and rain, and a spectral wind—and the final deliverance from the doomed vessel, are among the pictures that flit before us as we read—shadows all, but touched with weird light and colour, as from another world."

The "Ode to Mont Blanc" is one of the grandest of descriptive poems ever written. The author mentioned above thus sums up Coleridge as he was in the last years of his life:—"Coleridge sat on the brow of Highgate Hill, in those years, looking down on London and its smoke tumult, like a sage escaped from the inanity of life's battle; attracting towards him the thoughts of innumerable brave souls still engaged there. His express contributions to poetry, philosophy, or any specific province of human literature or enlightenment, had been small and sadly intermittent; but he had, especially among young inquiring men, a higher than literary—a kind of prophetic or magician character. He was thought to hold, he alone in England, the key of German and other transcendentalisms; knew the sublime secret

of believing by 'the reason' what the 'understanding' had been obliged to fling out as incredible; and could still, after Hume and Voltaire had done their best and worst with him, profess himself an orthodox Christian, and say and point to the Church of England, with its singular old rubrics and surplices at All-hallowtide, '*Esto perpetua.*' A sublime man; who, alone in those dark days, had saved his crown of spiritual manhood; escaping from the black materialisms and revolutionary deluges, with 'God, Freedom, Immortality,' still his: a king of men. The practical intellects of the world did not much heed him, or carelessly reckoned him a metaphysical dreamer: but to the rising spirits of the young generation he had this dusky sublime character; and sat there as a kind of Magus, girt in mystery and enigma, his Dodona oak-grove (Mr. Gillman's house at Highgate) whispering strange things, uncertain whether oracles or jargon."

Mr. Chambers thus speaks of him:—"An undue devotion to the study of metaphysics and of German literature seems to have early blighted the genius of this poet, whose powers, both of imagination and of expression, are among the highest that have been known in the present age. There is scarcely one of his poems which is not in some respect imperfect or deformed, and it is only in a few particular passages that he appears in his native and genuine lustre."

THE HON. WILLIAM ROBERT SPENCER.

1770–1834.

One of the most brilliant men of his time, and the favourite of the fashionable circles of the metropolis. Falling, however, into monetary difficulties, he died obscurely in Paris.

TRANSLATION OF LEONORA.
GELERT AND OTHER POEMS.

The former is from the German, the latter is the well-known ballad of the brave and ill-requited greyhound of Llewelyn; of the other poems, that entitled "Home" is by far the best.

THOMAS PRINGLE.

1788–1834.

Born in Roxburghshire. In 1820 he emigrated with his father and two brothers to the Cape of Good Hope, where they established a settlement named Glen Lynden. He afterwards removed to Cape Town, and finally settled in London, where he subsisted for some time on the productions of his pen, and became secretary to the African Society. He edited for some time the literary annual called "Friendship's Offering."

SCENES OF TEVIOTDALE.
EPHEMERIDES.
AFRICAN SKETCHES.

All his poems display a cultivated taste and fine feeling. The latter are personal narratives mixed with poems. That entitled "Afar in the Desert" is by far the best.

JAMES HOGG.

1770–1835.

James Hogg, known as the Ettrick Shepherd, was born in Selkirkshire. Like Burns, he followed rural occupations, being merely a shepherd, and receiving but a scanty education. Like Burns, too, he was also an unsuccessful farmer. Soon after he had published his first volume of poems he attracted the notice of Sir Walter Scott, who helped him considerably, and employed him to collect songs for his "Border Minstrelsy." He

lived for some time at a cottage at Altrive, where he died of dropsy.

THE QUEEN'S WAKE.
MADOR OF THE MOOR.
PILGRIMS OF THE SUN.
POETIC MIRROR.
QUEEN HYNDE.

"The Queen's Wake" is a legendary poem, or rather a number of poems, supposed to have been sung to Queen Mary at Holyrood Palace. Among them is a fairy tale of great beauty, entitled "Kilmeny." It is beyond doubt the best production of the author. It describes the recollections of a child who had been carried away into fairy-land, and then allowed for a short space of time to return to her mortal position. The poem displays a superlative power of description, marked by "great delicacy and beauty, and a wild, unearthly charm, unlike anything else in the circle of poetry, is diffused over the whole composition."

The "Pilgrims of the Sun" is a poem of considerable merit, written in blank verse. "Mador of the Moor" is after the manner of Spenser, with whom Hogg may be classed, as a "bard of romantic and legendary strain." As a poet, Hogg has been said to possess "great powers of versification, an unusual copiousness and facility in the use of poetical fiction and imagery, a lively conception of natural beauty, with a quick and prolific fancy to body forth his conceptions."

FELICIA HEMANS.

1793–1835.

Mrs. Hemans was born at Liverpool, where her father, Mr. Browne, was a wealthy merchant. The greater part of her youth was spent amid the lovely scenery of North Wales. About the year 1812, she married Captain Hemans, but the union seems to have been an unhappy

one, for he left England for Italy in 1818, and never returned. She died in Dublin.

THE FOREST SANCTUARY.
MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Her first appearance as a poetess was when she was but fifteen years old, when she published a few of her productions, which met with but little success. From that time till within a few weeks of her death she continued to write, at intervals, short pieces of great elegance. The best poem is undoubtedly "The Forest Sanctuary."

ROBERT NICOLL.

1814–1837.

A native of Auchtergaven, in Perthshire. His early years were spent in a lowly manner, during which, in the intervals of his various employments, he carefully acquired knowledge and taught himself reading and writing. He afterwards became editor of the "Leeds Times," which position he filled when his early death by consumption occurred.

SHORT POEMS.
SONGS.

These all display the greatest taste and poetic feeling, and are full of fancy and delineations of rural scenery.

LETITIA ELIZABETH LANDON.

1802–1838.

Born at Chelsea, and married to Mr. Maclean, the then governor of Cape Coast Castle. Soon after her marriage she took an overdose of prussic acid, to relieve some spasms, and was found dead in her room. She was chiefly known by the initials L. E. L.

THE IMPROVISATRICE.

This is her principal production, though her first and many other productions appeared in the "Literary Gazette." Through her verses there breathes a spirit of intense and romantic melancholy.

JAMES SMITH.

1775–1839.

Known chiefly as the author, jointly with his brother Horace, of the

REJECTED ADDRESSES,

which were published in 1813. It was one of the most popular and successful works ever published. It contained imitations of Wordsworth, Cobbett, Southey, Coleridge, and Crabbe, all of which are from the pen of James. Horace contributed imitations of Scott, Moore, Lewis, Fitzgerald, and Dr. Johnson.

WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED,

1802–1839.

Son of Mr. Serjeant Praed, entered the House of Commons and became Secretary of the Board of Control. While at Eton he started "The Etonian," and was one of the chief contributors to "Knight's Quarterly Magazine."

POEMS.

These, consisting of a number of short pieces, have been published in a collective form. They appeared chiefly in the various magazines, and display great originality and power. Many of them are cleverly written in a light humorous strain.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

1784–1842.

Born at Blackwood, in Dumfriesshire, Scotland. His father was a gardener and land steward, and was able to afford his son but few educational advantages. He was apprenticed to his uncle, a master mason and builder, but in 1810 he went to London and immediately became connected with the press. A few years after he acted as clerk of the works to Chantrey the sculptor.

SIR MARMADUKE MAXWELL.
TRADITIONAL TALES.
THE MAID OF ELVAR.

These works are of considerable merit, and display power of versification, with many touches of fancy and genuine feeling. His genius was somewhat erratic and but little under control. His contributions to the periodicals of the day, consisting of songs, &c., abound in touching illustrations of Scottish life and character.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

1774–1843.

Born at Bristol, the son of a linendraper, and educated at Westminster School and Balliol College, Oxford, which he left in rather an abrupt manner in 1794. He then studied law at Gray's Inn, and made a couple of visits to Lisbon, where his uncle was chaplain of the British factory. The last forty years of his life were spent at Greta Hall, near Keswick, Cumberland. Latterly he was without reason, in consequence of a stroke of paralysis. Like Johnson, he lived from "hand to mouth," until a pension placed him above the fear of want; but he could not then give up the habits of incessant study and literary toil, which had grown to be his second nature. He was never so happy as when he sat amid his books, pen in hand, adding newly-written

sheets to the pile of manuscript already lying in his copy-drawer.

JOAN OF ARC.
WAT TYLER.
THALABA, THE DESTROYER.
METRICAL TALES.
MADOC.
THE CURSE OF KEHAMA.
RODERICK, THE LAST OF THE GOTHS.
A VISION OF JUDGMENT.
ALL FOR LOVE.
VARIOUS MINOR POEMS.

"Joan of Arc" was published when the poet was but twenty-one years of age. It is an epic poem, written in the most masterly style. In "Wat Tyler" he has been considered to argue in favour of the adoption of the most extreme principles of liberty and equality. "Thalaba, the Destroyer," "depicts, in blank verse of very irregular length, but of great music, the perils and ultimate triumph of an Arabian hero, who fights with and conquers the powers of Evil. A splendid moonlight shining on the Eastern sands, with two figures—a sad mother and a weeping boy—wandering in the pale radiance, is the opening picture of a poem which abounds in brilliant painting. For the copyright of this work, which was finished in Portugal, Southey received a hundred guineas."

"Madoc," an epic poem in blank verse, founded on the legend of a voyage made by a Welsh prince to America in the twelfth century, and of his founding a colony there, appeared in 1805.

Mr. Collier, in his admirable "Biographical Sketches," thus sums it up:—

"'The Curse of Kehama' is his finest poem. In verse of most irregular music, but completely suited to his fantastic theme, he leads us to the terrestrial paradise,—to the realms below the sea,—to the heaven of heavens, and, in a sublime passage, through adamantine rock, lit with a furnace glow, into Padalon, the

Indian Hades. We follow the strange career of Kehama, a Hindoo rajah, who by penance and self-inflicted torture raises himself to a level with Brahma and Vishnu; we suffer with the poor mortal, who is burdened with the spell of a terrible curse laid on him by the enchanter, and we rejoice in his final deliverance and restoration to his family. Various Hindoo gods, a ghost, a benevolent spirit, and a woman, who receives immortality at the end, are among the *dramatis personæ*. Scenery and costume, situations and sentiments, are alike in keeping with the Oriental nature of the work. But, for all its splendour and all its correctness as a work of art, it is so far removed from the world in which our sympathies lie, that few can fully appreciate this noble poem, and perhaps none can return to it with never-wearied love, as to a play of Shakspeare or a novel by Scott."

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

1777–1844.

Born at Glasgow, and educated at that University, where he greatly distinguished himself by his translations from the Greek poets. He supported himself first by tuition, and then by doing odd work for booksellers, till the production of the "Pleasures of Hope," when he emerged from the obscurity in which he had been living. He soon afterwards went abroad, and visited Bavaria, and was present at the battle of Hohenlinden, when the French were victorious over the Austrians. He was afterwards elected Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow three successive times. He was also editor for ten years of the "New Monthly Magazine." He died at Boulogne, in France, and his

body was brought to England and placed in Westminster Abbey.

PLEASURES OF HOPE.
GERTRUDE OF WYOMING.
PILGRIM OF GLENCOE.
SPECIMENS OF THE BRITISH POETS.
THE LAST MAN.
SONGS, ETC.

The "Pleasures of Hope" was written in a "dusky Edinburgh lodging," and published when the poet was only twenty-two years of age. It immediately took a first place among the sentimental poems in the language. It is thoroughly in accordance with the spirit of the poetry of the time in which it was written, and is exceedingly didactic and moralizing: "though deformed by a few of the bombastical thoughts and tinsel expressions which young poets are apt to use, it is a noble effusion of ardent and elevated feeling, embodying much fine precept and many affecting views of human life."

"Gertrude of Wyoming" is a gentler and more pensive production altogether. The scene is laid in Pennsylvania, and the interest is derived from the customs and incidents of Indian life. It contains many beautiful delineations of character and feeling.

It is a question whether Campbell's shorter lyrics and songs do not eclipse his more elaborate productions. "The Last Man" is one of the former, and though the effort is an ambitious one, and contains many overstrained images, the conception is original and interesting. It is the soliloquy of the last representative of the human race, uttered among the tombs and crumbling ruins.

One of the best performances among his minor poems is "Hohenlinden," in which the poet describes, "in a spirit-stirring lyric, the snow at midnight, the sudden arming for battle, the shout of the soldiers, the fire of the artillery, and the death of the combatants, in one of the finest battle-pieces ever written."

"Lord Ullin's Daughter," "The Battle of the Baltic," and "Ye Mariners of England," are most successful efforts, and will live long in the popular mind. The latter are truly national songs.

In the higher walk of poetry Campbell has been well described as "refined, elegant, and tranquil, abounding in delicate traits, appealing to the softer emotions with a tenderness almost feminine; fluent and gentle as a melody, polished like a rare gem, and betraying the influence of a taste approaching the limits of extreme fastidiousness."

JOHN WILSON.

1785–1844.

Born in the town of Paisley, where his father was a wealthy manufacturer, educated at Glasgow and Oxford Universities. He distinguished himself greatly at the latter. After some reverses of fortune he went to the bar and attained to the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh.

THE ISLE OF PALMS.
THE CITY OF THE PLAGUE.

His poetical works, which have been overshadowed by his prose writings, have been gathered into two volumes. The above are the principal. "The prevailing defect of his poetry is its uniform sweetness and feminine softness of character." Some of the pictures drawn in the "City of the Plague" are most exquisite, and all the poems display great imagination and poetic fancy. The shipwreck in the former is a most picturesque piece of writing.

THOMAS HOOD.

1799–1845.

Though a humorist of the very highest character,

Hood wrote some poems which may be regarded as among his most valuable writings. Born in London, he displayed at an early age a talent for literature, and when barely twenty years of age was associated with the brilliant literary circle that contributed to the "London Magazine," of which he became sub-editor. The failure of a house of business involved him in poverty and debt, and instead of seeking relief from his load of trouble, he, like Scott, resolved to pay off the debt thus involuntarily contracted by working hard and economy. After living with his wife and family for some time on the Continent, he returned to London; but the strain upon his bodily strength was so great, that he succumbed under his self-imposed task and died. A pension had been obtained for him just before his death.

PLEA OF THE MIDSUMMER FAIRIES.
HERO AND LEANDER.
POEM ON HOPE.
BRIDGE OF SIGHS.
EUGENE ARAM.
SONG OF THE SHIRT.
SERIOUS AND COMIC BALLADS.

The first two of the above are the longest and most elaborate of his serious poems. In both is to be found passages that display the most intimate acquaintance with the beauties of nature and a superior imaginative power. Hood possessed a wonderful faculty of perceiving the ridiculous and odd. Even his serious poems are full of queer rhymes and droll fancies. His wit is present everywhere, but often when he is most witty he is most pathetic. In one of his ballads, entitled "I Remember," he manifests the deepest melancholy. The last verse, it has been well said, "seems to contain the sorrows of a whole life." The "Bridge of Sighs" and the "Song of the Shirt" originally appeared in "Punch." The latter is a striking picture of the miseries of a poor London sempstress. The poem on "Hope" is a masterly production. It appeared first in the "London Magazine."

"Hood stands very high among the poets of the second order. He was not a creative genius. He has given little indication of the highest imaginative faculty; but his fancy was most delicate and full of graceful play. His appreciation of the beauties of nature was very vivid; and some of his descriptions are models of their class. His most distinctive mark was the thorough *humanity* of his thoughts and expressions. His poems are amongst the most valuable contributions to English literature of sympathy with and insight into human life and character."

JOHN HOOKHAM FRERE,

1769–1846.

This author was a friend of Canning, with whom he was associated in the publication of the "Anti-Jacobin" newspaper. He was afterwards Chargé d'Affairs in Spain, under General Moore, and during the latter part of his life resided at Malta, where he died.

A SATIRICAL POEM,

entitled, "Prospectus and Specimen of an intended National Work by William and Robert Whistlecraft." It is a clever bit of burlesque writing, with many touches of real poetry. Byron is said to have founded his poem of "Beppo" upon it.

HORACE SMITH.

1779–1849.

Brother of the before-mentioned James Smith, and with him joint author of the "Rejected Addresses." The

ADDRESS TO A NUNNERY

is his best work, displaying great poetic taste and the finest sensibility.

EBENEZER ELLIOT.

1781–1849.

Born at Masborough, in Yorkshire, in humble circumstances of life. He was brought up to the trade of iron-founding, which he followed till just before his death. He became a noted man in the struggle for the repeal of the Corn Laws. His life was one of ups and downs, and fighting against pecuniary and domestic distress.

CORN LAW RHYMES.
THE WONDERS OF THE LANE.

The "Corn Law Rhymes," sometimes harsh and repulsive, did much towards keeping the agitation alive that led to the repeal of the Corn Laws. He wrote, however, other poems possessing great merits, and all his works show considerable genius and an intimate knowledge of country life and the wonders of the wayside.

BERNARD BARTON.

1784–1849.

A member of the Society of Friends, and called the Quaker-poet, was a native of Suffolk. He resided and died at the pleasant little town of Woodbridge, in Suffolk, where he was beloved for his genial and unaffected manners.

METRICAL EFFUSIONS.
NAPOLEON AND OTHER POEMS.
POETIC VIGILS.
DEVOTIONAL VERSES.

These and numerous other pieces appeared in magazines and periodicals: many of them display great merit and a thorough love of nature.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

1770–1850.

Born at Cockermouth, Cumberland, in 1770, and

educated at the University of Cambridge. He was intended for the Church, but his inclination to follow the pursuit, and that alone, for which he was so eminently gifted, was furthered by a legacy of £900 from a young friend named Calvert, who bequeathed it to him with a request that he would devote himself entirely to poetry. In 1790 he made a tour to the Continent, and in France he became acquainted with some of the Girondists, his sympathies being then entirely with the French Revolution. In 1813 he settled down at Rydal Mount, on Lake Windermere, and was about that time, through the interest of Lord Lonsdale, made Distributor of Stamps for the county of Westmoreland, with a salary of £500 a year. He succeeded Southey as poet laureate in 1843.

THE EXCURSION.
THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE.
RUTH.
WE ARE SEVEN.
LINES ON REVISITING THE WYE.

The "Excursion" is part of a larger work, entitled "The Recluse," in which the poet intended to discuss the human soul in all its deepest workings and its loftiest relations—we find no dramatic life and little human interest; and to this feature of the poem, as well as to the novelty of finding subtle metaphysical reasoning embodied in blank verse, its original unpopularity must be ascribed. The critics were particularly hard upon it, but its rich fancy and deep sensibility has caused it to stand its ground, and even to become popular. Its admirers are increasing year by year. "The White Doe of Rylstone" is a tragic tale founded upon the ruin of a family during the civil war.

In Wordsworth may be found all the qualities which he himself laid down as a rule that a poet should possess, although his critics refused to recognize them.

The Lake school of poetry, in which Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, and Wilson are the most conspi-

cuous members, needs some notice. The term was originally applied contemptuously, and was first used because the poets mentioned above had each their dwellings by the English lakes, and sent forth their poetical effusions from that district.

Wordsworth was the great master, and his aim was to clothe in the simplest English speech, poetical thoughts and fancies. Cowper was the popular bard of the day, and his forcible yet clear language had routed, as it were, the band of poets who revelled in an exalted and inflated diction, and were not content with other subjects than those of the old Romanists—"the military hero waving his red sword amid battle smoke; the assassin watching from the dark shadow of a vaulted doorway his unconscious victim, who strolls, singing in the white moonlight, down the empty street; the lover, 'sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad made to his mistress' eyebrow,' and kindred themes;" and while Wordsworth cannot be said to have originated the school, he certainly established it. The reaction had already taken place, the public were already weaned, as it were, from their vitiated tastes; and Wordsworth and his friends did but make a further step in the direction that had already been pointed out. His efforts were severely criticised and somewhat unjustly condemned; for if it cannot be said "that he effected a reform in the language of poetry, that he found the public bigoted to a vicious and flowery diction, which seemed to mean a great deal and really meant nothing, and that he led them back to sense and simplicity," it is true that he and the other poets of the Lake school not only took their subjects from among the commonest things and wrote their poems in the simplest style, but that they demonstrated beyond a doubt that such was compatible with the truest poetic grace and the richest fancy. They listened to Nature and her mysterious harmonies, "to the ceaseless song of praise that rises from every blade of grass and every dewdrop, warbles in the fluting of

every lark, and sweeps to heaven in every wave of air; they found in their own deep hearts a musical echo of that song, and shaping into words the swelling of their inward faith, they spoke to the world in a way to which the world was little used, about things in which the world saw no poetic beauty."

They disliked the old conventional mode of treating the old subjects, and inculcated nature and simplicity. It may be that in their opposition they rushed into an almost ridiculous extreme, but the theory started by Cowper and Crabbe was a healthful one, and proved that it was based upon sound principles by standing the storm of ridicule and criticism with which it was met. The Lake poets held on through all, convinced that they were right, and a reaction soon set in in their favour. In the present we can more accurately judge of the value of the service they rendered. They erred in judgment, but they were right in the main, and that they were so is shown in the living charm of their writings. The undying human interest they display is not only instantly recognized, but finds an echo in the heart of every disciple. That their influence for good was real has been proved beyond doubt, and the principles of the Lake school of poets, by the very force of their truth, have made a lasting impression upon the British mind.

THOMAS MOORE.

1779–1852.

Born in Dublin, of humble parentage, he was enabled by his own talents and genius, and by the diligent self-denying exertions of his mother, to obtain a decent education. When only fourteen he contributed verses of no mean character to a magazine. He then studied at Trinity College, and afterwards entered the Middle Temple, London, in 1799. Through Lord Moira, to whom he had an introduction, he was presented to the

Prince Regent, who allowed him to dedicate a translation of "Anacreon" to him. With this start it was not long before he attained to a fair position. Through the same interest he was appointed, in 1803, to the Registrarship of the Bermudas, which office he filled but a short time, when he left the work to a deputy, while he made a tour in the United States, after which he returned to England. Like Southey, he was bereft of reason some time before his death.

IRISH MELODIES.
LALLA ROOKH.
THE LOVES OF THE ANGELS.
MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

The true bent of Moore's genius was to lyrical composition. His songs are characterized by sparkling fancy, combined with a chastened gaiety. The first volume of poems, which he published when only twenty years of age, under the fictitious name of Little, were censured for the somewhat licentious character of some of the contents. The words adapted to the "Irish Melodies," while they are not equal to the composition of the same class that came from Burns, lacking both their passion and tenderness, yet give evidence of poetical feeling and fancy, and are specimens of polished and most musical verse.

"Lalla Rookh" is an Oriental tale, or rather a series of tales, presenting a picture of Eastern life replete with the most voluptuous and richest Asiatic imagery. Shutting himself up in a Derbyshire cottage, with a pile of books on Oriental history and travel, he so steeped his mind in the colours of his theme, that he is said to have been asked by one who knew Asia well, at what time he had travelled there.

The plan of "Lalla Rookh" is original and happy; it consists of a little prose love-tale, describing the journey of a beautiful Oriental princess from Delhi to Bucharia, where she is to meet her betrothed husband, the king of the latter country. "Great splendour of

imagination and immense stores of Eastern reading are lavished on the description of this gorgeous *progress*, and the details of scenery, manners, and ceremonial are given with an almost overpowering luxuriance of painting, artfully relieved by a pleasant epigrammatic humour displayed in the character and criticisms of the princess's pompous and pedantic chamberlain, Fadladeen. For Lalla Rookh's amusement, when stopping for her night's repose, a young Bucharian poet, Feramoz, is introduced, who chants to the accompaniment of his national guitar four separate poems of a narrative character, which are thus, so to say, incrusted in the prose story. The princess becomes gradually enamoured of the interesting young bard, and her growing melancholy continues till her arrival at her future home, where, in the person of her betrothed husband, who comes to meet her in royal pomp, she recognizes the musician who had employed his disguise of a poor minstrel to gain that love which he deserved to enjoy as a monarch." The four poems are entitled:—"The Veiled Prophet," "The Fire Worshippers," "Paradise and the Peri," and the "Light of the Harem."

The "Loves of the Angels" is inferior both in conception and interest—neither is it treated so well as "Lalla Rookh." It is based upon the passage of the Book of Genesis, where it is said that in the first ages the "sons of God" became enamoured of the daughters of men. From which connection came the Giants. Three of these angels are introduced, who each in turn relate their own story with somewhat tiresome effect.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

1771–1854.

Born at Irvine, in Ayrshire. He became somewhat noted as a journalist and as editor of the "Sheffield

Iris." Was twice imprisoned in York Castle for libel. He long enjoyed a pension of £200 a year.

THE WANDERER IN SWITZERLAND.
WEST INDIES.
PRISON AMUSEMENTS.
GREENLAND.
THE PELICAN ISLAND.

The above poems are the most important of many that came from his pen. The poem on the "West Indies," which excels in the freedom and force with which the scenes are drawn, was written to celebrate the abolition of slavery by England, in 1807. "Prison Amusements" was written during his imprisonment in York Castle. "Greenland" is a poem in five cantos, and with the "Pelican Island," in nine cantos, is remarkable for many richly descriptive passages. As a poet, Montgomery is characterized by "great purity and elevation of thought, harmonious versification, and a fine strain of devotional feeling."

SAMUEL ROGERS,

1763–1855,

Was born at Stoke Newington, and attained to great eminence as a London banker. Though essentially a poet of the latter part of the last and the beginning of the present century, he died not so long ago but that his face and form may be recalled by many. He was of a most benevolent character, especially to the poor literary struggler.

PLEASURES OF MEMORY.
COLUMBUS.
HUMAN LIFE.
ITALY.

By the first poem, which is also the earliest of the above, he is best known. It was published in 1792. It contains many pictures of exceeding beauty, and many passages of excellence and animation. Both this

and his other works display the greatest care in their finish and elaboration, being clear and polished in style, and presenting a classic beauty, without much originality. They lack somewhat of energy, but possess the power of touching the finer sensibilities, and of describing "visible and mental objects with truth and effect."

CONCLUSION.

To those who have followed our remarks on each period, from the Introduction to the prose writers to the end of the remarks on the last period into which the poets have been divided, it may not be amiss to conclude with some general remarks upon the growth and characteristics of English Literature. When we consider the lateness of its birth and the many adverse circumstances that crippled its growth, and then turn our thoughts to its present influence and mighty volume, and further remember that it is the literature of two continents, England and America, we may well ask the secret of its power and success. It will hardly be claiming too much if we ask recognition for it as the most powerful literature in the world. It certainly is the most popular —popular in the sense of appertaining to, and being adapted for, the people; and yet with this it contains works of learning and research that yield to those of no other country,—works of fancy and imagination that soar far above the cherished specimens of other modern literatures, and poems that are worthy a place beside the famous works of the most glorious poets of the Grecian age. As far as pure morality and religious devotion are concerned, they are beyond comparison with any. In every department, in the drama, in history, in philosophy, in theology, in criticism, in poetry—epical or lyrical—in all are to be found masterpieces of thought and elegant writing that hold their own when compared with similar compositions in

literatures of the same or even older growth. The wonderful and rapid spreading of the Anglo-Saxon race over the vast Western Continent has given a wider range to the power and influence of English Literature; the earliest settlers from our own shores loved to ponder over the roughly-printed pages from the land of their birth, and taught their children to lisp the numbers that they had learned in their infancy, or had become attached to in later years; and as they spread gradually from south to north, and towards the west, along with them they not only carried their English book but their love for reading—their love of the literature. And this has grown under an enlightened school system, till our English Literature is better known to the many in the Western Continent than it is in the land that has given it birth. Scarcely a child grows up in the United States without a considerable acquaintance with the great English writers from the earliest period.

English Literature, therefore, bears the test of time, and proves its innate worth by appealing successfully to the heart, and this apart from local association or love of country. A further proof is afforded in the fact that, till lately, there has been but little American Literature; not because there was no genius to originate it, but because the literature of the Old country was of such sterling quality, and so good, that to supplement it or put anything else in its place almost amounted to a crime.

Begun when the glories of Rome and Greece were fading, and "It is finished" had been written in golden letters after their literature. Begun when mental darkness reigned almost supreme in Britain, nurtured amid the noise of battle and the tumult of invasion, hidden in the breasts of bards and song-singers, stricken down by conquerers, smothered under forms and fettered by rules, made ridiculous by enthusiasts and weakened by those who intended to strengthen, it has yet become what it is, and attained a foremost and proud position.

It cannot fail to strike all who make a close and familiar acquaintance with the works in all branches of our literature, that to an extraordinary degree does the love of right and truth characterize it. The works are few that breathe anything to the contrary. True, many have been written that have had for their object the scoffing at religion and morality, but it is an undoubted fact that not only have the great majority of English authors from the earliest times been on the side of right, but that few works have lived that inculcated opposite views. In this lies its great strength. The earliest prose writers, it must not be forgotten, wrote not with sordid motives. To them it was a joyful thing to lead their fellows to purity, to encourage them in good things. Their writings universally advocate religion, order, and morality. The Saxon writers, rough and homely as they were, wanted all men to be right and do right, as there was another and happier land, where only the good could enter in. Later on, whether in the Sermons of Latimer or the Rhymes of Gower, the same is observable. With such a foundation it could not but live and flourish, and it is a matter for rejoicing that the leaven has never failed. The savour of the righteous salt is not lost now. Many a time and oft have crises occurred that threatened to overturn all this; indeed, premiums have been offered for the purpose, but at the bottom of the English character there has ever been the Saxon love of truth; and while this is so, no style, no language, no opinions can live that are vicious, or that are not virtuous.

The glorious burst of thought and opinion in the days of Elizabeth, which may be said to have made literature a national thing, and gave it a vigour and elegance far beyond what it had hitherto possessed, was due to the Reformation, or grand protest by honest men against the vices and immorality of a corrupt Church and priesthood. The earnestness which is shown in the Puritan writings came of the attempts to degrade law and order by the Royalists, and the religious fervour of Milton

not only inspired the most glorious poem of our literature, but gave to it that power which has enabled it to live and command the admiration and affection of succeeding ages, and overshadow the best attempts of the age that neglected, if it did not scoff at it. And so it shall ever be: no writer will ever live, no work will ever survive, that is not built upon the foundation laid down at the commencement.

Manliness is another and most important characteristic of English Literature; occasionally it has been obscured by meaningless forms and fulsome expressions, but it has ever been bold and original. As a strong man bound, it lay a prisoner in the Euphuism of Elizabeth's court, or hidden amid the "word rubbish" of the eighteenth century. It is manly in this respect—not afraid of the truth. English authors of repute, with few exceptions, have never shrunk, when true and bitter things had to be said, from saying them. It is also manly in the sense of being human. This, perhaps, more so than any other literature. In its intense humanity lies, to a large extent, the secret of its popularity, and the secret of its vivacity. One of the prime and essential qualities required in a literature is the power of addressing man as man, and of successfully appealing to his passions, his emotions, his vices and virtues, and this it is that makes the difference between the literature of knowledge and the literature of power; as Mr. De Quincey has said, "The function of the one is to teach the function of the second to move. The very highest work that has ever existed in the literature of knowledge is but a provisional work; a book upon trial and sufferance. Let its teaching be even partially revised, let it be but expanded, nay, even let its teaching be but placed in a better order, and instantly it is superseded. Whereas the feeblest work in the literature of power, surviving at all, survives as finished and unalterable among men. For instance, the 'Principia' of Sir Isaac Newton was a book *militant* on earth from the first. In all stages of its progress it would have

to fight for its existence: first, as regards absolute truth; secondly, when that combat is over, as regards its form or mode of presenting the truth. And as soon as a La Place or anybody else builds higher upon the foundations laid by this book, effectually he throws it out of the sunshine into decay and darkness; by weapons even from this book he superannuates and destroys it, so that soon the name of Newton remains as a mere *nominis umbra*, but his book, as a living power, has transmigrated into other forms. Now, on the contrary, the 'Iliad,' the 'Prometheus' of Æschylus, the 'Othello' or 'King Lear,' the 'Hamlet' or 'Macbeth,' and the 'Paradise Lost' are no militant but triumphant power as long as the languages exist in which they speak or can be taught to speak. They never *can* transmigrate into new incarnations. . . All the literature of knowledge builds only ground-nests, that are swept away by floods, or confounded by the plough; but the literature of power builds nests in aërial altitudes, of temples sacred from violation, or of forests inaccessible to fraud. *This* is a great prerogative of the *power*-literature. . . . The *knowledge*-literature, like the fashion of this world, passeth away."

In conclusion, let it be borne in mind that a great portion of our literature was written for a purpose, and this purpose, the spirit and aim of the author, must not be forgotten by the student. In reading the works of Chaucer, for instance, or Gower, or Wycliffe, or Ascham, of Clarendon, Burnet, or Butler, the times in which they lived, the circumstances of their life, the part they played in the politics, the religion, the strife of their times, must be considered, if a true appreciation of their works is desired.

The literature of any age is to a large extent the reflex of passing events, and the influence of these events is more or less discernible to readers in after times. The plain facts of history, therefore, meet with wonderful explanation from such literature, and enable us to arrive at our own conclusions as to their causes and effects.

Many a dark historical passage is enlightened by a page of thought from a writer who lived at the time when the events took place, the impressions of which were fresh on his mind at the time. In the same way as a student two hundred years hence may draw a tolerably faithful picture of English life at the present time from the pages of "Vanity Fair," so Latimer's Sermons afford us a faithful picture, not only of the habits of men, but the thoughts that agitated men's minds at the time they were preached; and as from Gower's "Vox Clamantis" we get an explanation of the circumstances of the Wat Tyler rebellion, such as no history has afforded, so Russell's Letters, reprinted from the *Times*, will give to readers in times to come an insight into the Crimean War such as a mere historical record could never give.

If all this is borne in mind, students of English Literature will find an interest apart from the delight of perusal of the works of this or that author. Fresh ideas as to the history of England will be engendered, and a wider and more expansive grasp upon the bearing of the great national events of past times be obtained.

As to the benefits of a study of English Literature *per se*, they are not questioned, nor need they be dilated upon. To become acquainted with the noble and chaste minds of those gifted men, whose works are left as a precious heirloom to the world, must raise the thoughts and hopes and aspirations. The universality of their works, and the intense humanity they display, make the study one of the best and pleasantest. The student need bring but little learning. With the exception of a few of the earlier poems, a knowledge of the English language of the present day suffices. Thus it is brought within the range of all Englishmen, as soon as they can read and understand their mother-tongue. And, without doubt, were greater attention paid to this department of study, were it a part of the programme of every college and school, were the knowledge of it recognized as much a necessity as a knowledge of history, there would be less

hankering after the puerile literature that the present day sees so much of. The great storehouse of English literature lies open to all; it contains glorious and never-fading beauties of prose and poetry, such as can never be overshadowed, if reached—poetry which is prose, and prose that is poetry. The perfection of a literature is in the true combination of its poetry and prose, which bear to each other a relation which has been imaged with equal truth and fancy in these simple stanzas :—

I looked upon a plain of green
That some one called the land of prose,
Where many living things were seen
In movement or repose.

I looked upon a stately hill,
That well was named the mount of song,
Where golden shadows dwelt at will,
The woods and streams among.

But most this fact my wonder bred,
Though known by all the nobly wise—
It was the mountain streams that fed
That fair green plain's amenities.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

AMERICAN LITERATURE.

THE literature of America is yet in its infancy, and many of its best authors are still living. They do not, therefore, come within the scope of this work. Some few, however, distinguished themselves during the last century, and earned such a place that they cannot be ignored altogether.

The literature is yet in its infancy: it must not be forgotten, however, that its writers have drawn their information from the fountain-head of our own literature, that their language is the same as ours, and it may be proudly acknowledged that, with a few exceptions, their aim is identical with our best English authors.

The earliest form developed seems to have been the Diary. This is not to be wondered at, seeing the manner in which the early settlements by Englishmen took place. The country was full of new beauties, fresh scenes, new forms of life, and the circumstances of the growth of the settlements were peculiar. All this made a diary not only interesting, but in the after events that

took place it became a basis on which greater historical works could be built.

Theological literature seems next to have been produced. The Pilgrim Fathers were men of piety and learning, and as soon as they could they left enduring records of their thoughts and opinions. Gradually, however, the other and lighter forms were introduced, and at the present time may be found distinguished representatives of each.

The literature of Romance and Fiction is the earliest with which we became acquainted, and in this department some few authors stand prominently out. History, too, has given us some writers that, for painstaking research and careful elaboration, occupy a worthy position. In the higher departments of intellectual exertion, there are not many works that can be said to be masterpieces, either in original invention or discovery, or as models of skill or the art of communication. A native, classical literature does not yet exist,—nothing has yet appeared that can claim a high position as an epic poem. The solid literature is almost entirely practical in its aims and objects. It displays undeniably much energy of thinking, especially when those "practical questions are dealt with towards which the national temper and the cast of the social institutions concur in determining the public taste."

In the past, the nation had all the literature of the old country to fall back upon, and, moreover, the time and attention of the Americans have been taken up by the more important question of developing the resources of the country, and in the events of political, social, and religious life. Now, however, the foundation has been made, and the structure is being slowly but surely raised.

"Our hope of future good from the Transatlantic literature of our language will be the more lively when we remember, that almost all its past efforts may be said to have been made within a period of hardly more than forty years; and that, likewise, the literary pro-

ducts of the latter half of that time have far surpassed those of the preceding half, not in number only, but in value. Those works that belong to the last twenty years are very like in character to the contemporaneous writings that have appeared in England; and their merit, if insufficient to constitute a brilliant era in literary history, is yet such as to strengthen, in no small measure, the claim of our generation to that secondary rank which it holds in virtue of our native productions."

There is but little doubt that in the course of the next fifty or hundred years the authors of America will command a prominent position in the literature of the English language.

JOHN WINTHROP.

1587–1649.

John Winthrop, one of the Pilgrim Fathers, and some time governor of Massachusetts, was the author of a

DIARY OF EVENTS

that took place in that colony down to the year 1644. It is an interesting account of the early struggles of the Puritan settlers.

COTTON MATHER.

1663–1728.

A Puritan minister and nonconformist divine at Boston, Massachusetts.

He was born at Boston, and having passed through the studies of Harvard University, entered on the duties of his sacred office in 1684. He distinguished himself by his philanthropical efforts, and he may be regarded as in some sense the progenitor of our Peace Societies, for he established an institution of *Peace-*

makers, whose professed object was to settle differences between private individuals, as others would settle differences among nations, by the interposition of friendly offices. Though an intelligent man, he was not free from the baneful prejudice which made men not only believe in witches, but shockingly punish the innocent persons whom they held to bear that character.

MAGNALIA CHRISTI AMERICANA.

This work is an ecclesiastical history of New England.

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

1703–1758.

Born at East Windsor, Connecticut. After some years' study, and when only nineteen years of age, he was licensed as a minister of the Congregational denomination. In 1757 he was confirmed in the office of president in the college of New Jersey, which honourable position he held but a few months, for he was seized in the following year with small-pox and died.

THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL.
HISTORY OF REDEMPTION.
TRUE VIRTUE.
ORIGINAL SIN.

The first mentioned is his principal work, and is considered to be a perfect masterpiece of sound metaphysical reasoning. The "Treatises," three of which are mentioned, "display great power of thought, warm piety, and a profound acquaintance with the scriptures."

JOHN WOOLMAN.

1720–1772.

A Quaker, who made a tour through England, and

published the results of his observations in the form of a

JOURNAL.

Charles Lamb was exceedingly pleased with the book and its reflections.

JOHN LEDYARD.

1751–1789.

A traveller in all parts of the world, published the narratives of his journeys in Siberia and Central Africa. He was born at Groton, in Connecticut, and educated at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire. Unable to follow up his studies for want of means, he worked his passage from New York to London as a common sailor, and sailed with Captain Cook on his third voyage. Setting out from England with ten guineas in his pocket, he traversed Denmark and Sweden, passed round the head of the Gulf of Bothnia, and reached St. Petersburg (1787), without money, shoes, or stockings, having gone this immense distance on foot in an Arctic winter. He was carried off by a bilious fever, when on his way to Africa.

JOHN WITHERSPOON.

1722–1794.

A native of Scotland, and president of the college of New Jersey, was the author of a work entitled

ECCLESIASTICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

1706–1799.

Born at Boston, New England. At an early age he was apprenticed to a printer, and by industry and prudence, combined with integrity and genius, he rose to a

high position among his countrymen. He took a considerable share in all the great political movements of his time, especially during the war of Independence, when he acted as minister plenipotentiary at the Court of France, and successfully used his powers of statesmanship to secure the co-operation of the French for his countrymen against England.

THE WAY TO WEALTH.
SCIENTIFIC PAPERS.
ESSAYS.
LETTERS.
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

"The Way to Wealth" is a collection of the proverbial philosophy which is to be found in "Poor Richard's Almanac," which he began in 1732, and carried on for twenty-five years. His greatest fame was won, however, by his scientific discoveries, and especially his researches into the laws of electricity. "The Essays" are upon various subjects, historical, political, and commercial, and display the most profound wisdom and insight into the motives that actuate men's actions. His "Autobiography," in which he traces his career and gives the rules of his life and conduct, is a book that should be read by every young man.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

1757–1804.

A celebrated lawyer and statesman, who distinguished himself during the Revolution. He was the editor and author of the

FEDERALIST;

a journal that played a prominent part in the political discussions of its day.

CHARLES B. BROWNE.

1771–1810.

Born in Philadelphia. Was the author of some well-known works.

ARTHUR MERVYN.
EDGAR HUNTLY.
WIELAND.
ORMOND.

They are works that do not display a high order of merit, but are pleasant and readable.

TIMOTHY DWIGHT.

1752–1817.

Born at Northampton, Massachusetts. He was educated for and ordained a Congregational minister, and afterwards became an army chaplain, and president of Yale College.

THEOLOGY EXPLAINED AND DEFENDED.
HISTORY, ELOQUENCE, AND POETRY OF THE BIBLE.

The former is his chief work, and it occupies a foremost place among theological writings. It is clearly, logically, and profoundly written.

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

1780–1842.

Born at Newport, Rhode Island, and educated at Harvard College, where he greatly distinguished himself by his scholarship and high attainments. After leaving college he became a tutor in Virginia, and in 1803 was ordained minister of a Unitarian church, in Boston. He was a noted lecturer and a firm opponent of slavery.

NATIONAL LITERATURE.
MILTON.
THE ELEVATION OF THE LABOURING CLASSES.
DISCOURSES UPON THE EVIDENCES OF RELIGION.

The latter is his chief theological work. The Discourses as well as most of his works were delivered as orations and addresses in public. His writings are distinguished for most original thoughts and language of the most brilliant eloquence, combined with delicacy and beauty.

"He is greater as a writer than as a thinker: nor has he energy enough to claim honour as a writer of the first class. But his purity and seriousness of sentiment, his philanthropy and his unostentatious courage, have won respect for him, as a man actuated by a truly religious spirit, from those who reject most decidedly his views of religious doctrine."

"Regarding Christianity not as a system of dogmas, but as a power for the renewing of all human relations, bringing forward with unusual emphasis the high dignity and destination of man, Channing stood at the head of his denomination in America, and exerted a great influence generally, as well as over his fellow-believers in England and France. Being himself pervaded by the spirit of Christian love and moral feeling, he possessed the power of seizing the attention and carrying away the heart."

JOSEPH STORY.

1779–1845.

A distinguished American judge, was born at Marblehead, in Massachusetts. He was educated at Harvard University, was called to the bar in 1801, and soon became eminent in his profession. He was elected a member of the State Legislature of Massachusetts, and was chosen a member of Congress. In 1811 he was appointed an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and was afterwards chosen

Professor of Jurisprudence at Harvard University. His "Legal Writings" are highly distinguished for their knowledge and clearness.

ALEXANDER EVERETT.

1790–1847.

Born at Boston, and distinguished as a diplomatist.

EUROPE.
NEW IDEA OF POPULATION.
AMERICA.

These and other essays display great talent, and in many places brilliant writing.

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

1811–1849.

An author whose reckless intemperance brought his life to an early close. He was born at Baltimore, and after following various professions turned author: possessed of the greatest talent, and friends who could help him, he might have risen to a first place among American literary men.

THE RAVEN.
ANNABEL LEE.
PROSE TALES.

The well-known poem of "The Raven" is "an exquisite piece of mystery and music." "Annabel Lee" is a lament for his dead wife, in a most tender and melancholy strain, and is one of the sweetest lyrics in the language.

The prose tales are full of the most sensational interest, and the most wild and absorbing speculation.

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON.

1780–1851.

The son of a French admiral, who settled in Louisiana, and a great traveller and student of natural history. He wrote a trustworthy and valuable book upon

THE BIRDS OF AMERICA,

which is not only cleverly but pleasantly written.

J. F. COOPER.

1789–1851.

Born at Burlington, in New Jersey. He was for some time in the United States navy. He afterwards retired into private life and devoted himself to literature, residing the while on the border of Ostego Lake.

PRECAUTION.
THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS.
THE PRAIRIE.
THE PATHFINDER.
THE DEERSLAYER.
THE PILOT.
THE SPY.

Cooper was eminently successful throughout his brilliant literary course in the depicting of Indian and naval scenes. His novels are well known on both sides of the Atlantic. The "Pilot," perhaps, stands first in order of merit, the character of Long Tom Coffin being pre-eminently his best creation. The "Spy" is very popular tale, founded upon the history of the American war.

It is, perhaps, a fair criticism of them by Mr. Spalding, when he says that they give "evidence of careless haste, both in their matter and in their diction; they are also distinctively American, not in their topics only, but in their tone of opinion and feeling. No failure, again, could be more decided than their strainings at wit or humour, and their attempts at describing

or estimating the features of polished society: their picturesqueness, too, though striking, is in no small degree theatrical and overwrought; but there is a wonderful impressiveness in the author's sketches from his favourite fields of observation, the perilous adventures of the mariner, and the half-savage life of the settler in the wilderness."

JOHN LLOYD STEPHENS.

1805–1852.

Born in New Jersey. He spent a considerable portion of his time wandering through Europe and Asia; Central America also engaged his attention, and while surveying the Isthmus of Panama, with a view of connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans by railway, he overtasked his strength and died.

INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL

is an interesting and well written account of his wanderings.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

1783–1859.

Born at New York, the descendant of an ancient Orkney family. His father was a merchant, and educated him for the bar. Shortly after his admission he began his contributions to literature. In 1815 he came to Liverpool to manage a branch of the firm of Irving Brothers, but the house failed, and its representative turned author by profession. He resided several years at Madrid, and while in England, in 1830, he received one of the gold medals, conferred by George IV., for his eminence in historical writing. He died at his pleasant residence, Sunnyside, on the Hudson.

SALMAGUNDI.
HISTORY OF NEW YORK.
SKETCH-BOOK OF GEOFFREY CRAYON.

BRACEBRIDGE HALL.
TALES OF A TRAVELLER.
LIFE OF COLUMBUS.
CONQUEST OF GRANADA.
COMPANIONS OF COLUMBUS.
TALES OF THE ALHAMBRA.
TOUR ON THE PRAIRIES.
ABBOTSFORD AND NEWSTEAD ABBEY.
ASTORIA, BEYOND THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.
CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE.
LIFE OF GOLDSMITH.
MAHOMET AND HIS SUCCESSORS.
WOLFERT'S ROOST.
LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

The "History of New York," by Diedrich Knickerbocker, as Irving styled himself, is a quaint burlesque picture of the life of the old Dutch and Swedish colonists. The "Sketch-book," which was published in England after the failure of the firm with which he was connected, was submitted to Sir Walter Scott, who pronounced a most favourable opinion upon it. The *nom de plume* of the author in this case was Geoffrey Crayon.

It would take too long to go through the list of Irving's works. For nearly half a century he was before the public as novelist, essayist, historian, and biographer. His "Life of Columbus" is a most complete work, and displays the greatest research. His residence in Spain enabled him to devote considerable time to obtaining all the information that access to Spanish records could give.

"Whatever his subject—an English manor-house, with bright fires and Christmas snow—a drowsy Dutch farm-steading in Sleepy Hollow—a moonlit court in the Alhambra—the great Italian sailor—the sweet-souled Irish author—the simply noble American general—we are charmed by the poetic graces of his fancy and the liquid music of his style."

"Inclining always towards a finical elaboration of style, and a feminine refinement of serious sentiment,

which combine to enfeeble their general effect, the writings of this graceful novelist and essayist are yet among the most pleasing to which our time has given birth." In his later works of fiction, through which he is best known to English readers, he evinces his great partiality for English tastes and English literature, and they are all free from that acerbity of tone and those sneering remarks that have marred the descriptions of some other writers who have visited England. Not only are his works graceful, but many of them are full of a rich humour and sparkling wit. Irving stands among the very first writers that America has produced, and whatever he wrote he wrote well. In history, his facts may be relied on; and though he wrote no great historical work that can put him on a level with Macaulay, his "Columbus, "Conquest of Granada," "Companions of Columbus," "Mahomet and his Successors," and "Life of Washington," are important and valuable aids to the historian. The early history of America, and her after struggles for independence and territory, are faithfully and truthfully pictured, while the story reads as a romance.

WILLIAM HICKLING PRESCOTT.

1796–1859.

Born at Salem, Massachusetts. While at college, he was accidentally deprived of the sight of one eye by the throwing of a crust. The sight of his other eye failed him some time before his death, which rendered him unable to read or write. His death was caused by paralysis.

THE REIGN OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA.
CONQUEST OF MEXICO.
CONQUEST OF PERU.
HISTORY OF PHILIP II. OF SPAIN.

Prescott is the chief of American historians, and all

his works display the closest research and greatest faithfulness. They have been remarkably successful, and take a high position among works of a similar kind in other countries.

"His narratives," says Mr. Spalding, "are equally admirable for their animation and their grace; though far from being philosophical, he is solidly and reflectively instructive in works which, at the same time, hurry us along with the fascination of a romance; and, pursuing his studies under a deprivation almost parallel to the blindness of Milton, he has yet gained just credit for extraordinary fulness of research, as well as for scrupulous accuracy in recording its results."

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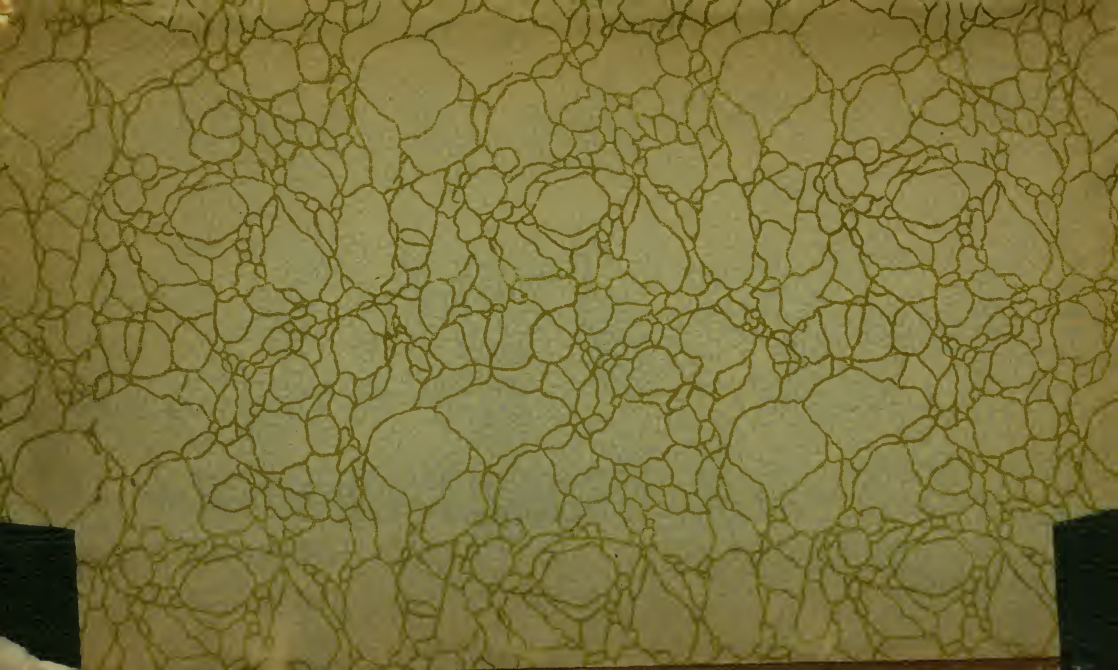
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Woodfall and Kinder, Printers, Milford Lane, Strand, London, W.C.



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